No.66 · SCIENCE FICTION · HORROR · FANTASY · ANIMATION · SPFX · 95p

STARBURST

BRAINSTORM

DIRECTOR DOUGLAS TRUMBULL ON SPECIAL EFFECTS, MOVIE MAKING AND NEW FILM PROCESSES

STRANGE INVADERS

INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR MICHAEL LAUGHLIN

NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN

DIRECTOR IRVIN KERSHNER ON SEAN CONNERY'S BOND

PLUS: VIDEO NASTIES
TV INVASIONS & HORROR HEROINES

STILL BRITAIN'S NO 1 FANTASY MAGAZINE

Barbara Carrera as Fatima Blush in
NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN

Starburst

Volume 5, Number 5
February 1984 issue

Editor:
Alan McKenzie
Assistant Editor:
Roger P. Birchall
Production:
Tim Hampson
& Alison Gill
Colour:
Cheamworth Ltd
Distribution:
Comag
Financial Controller:
Robert W. Sutherland
Advertising:
Sally Benson
Publisher:
Stan Lee

Writers this issue:
John Brosnan
Chris Charles
Tony Crawley
Phil Edwards
Barry Forshaw
Sally Gary
Richard Holliss
Alan Jones
Jean Marc Lofficier
Randy Lofficier

Published monthly by Marvel Comics Ltd., 23 Redan Place, London W2, England. All photographic material is copyright © BBC, NBC, ABC, CBS, ITC, Columbia, New Realm, Rank, Twentieth Century-Fox, UIP, United Artists, Paramount, Warner Bros, Walt Disney Productions, CIC, EMI, MGM, MCA-Universal or Lucasfilm Ltd (unless otherwise stated) and appears with their kind permission. All remaining material is copyright © 1984 Marvel Comics Ltd., a subsidiary of Cadence Industries. Starburst is a tradename and trademark of Marvel Comics, Ltd. While contributions are encouraged, the publishers cannot be held responsible for unsolicited manuscripts and photos. All letters sent to Starburst will be considered for publication.
For display advertising contact Sally Benson at the editorial address. Printed in the United Kingdom.

STARBURST LETTERS 4
The readers sound off on everything from Poltergeist to Pearl and Dean. So how come you're not writing?

THINGS TO COME 6
Our intrepid and well-travelled news reporter Tony Crawley scours the globe in search of all the latest happenings in the world of fantasy.

INVASION! 10
Ahead of the pack, Starburst reports on the new mini-series for tv, "V", produced by Ken Johnson, the man who made The Six Million Dollar Man and The Incredible Hulk.

DIRECTING BOND 12
We present an interview with Irvin Kershner, director of The Empire Strikes Back and more recently, Never Say Never Again.

SHOOTING ON THE STREETS 18
Tony Crawley reports on the filming of Walter Hill's new futuristic adventure film, Streets of Fire.

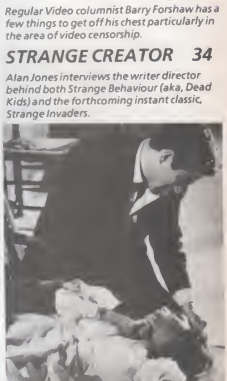
SCORING BRAINSTORM 20
Phil Edwards interviews film composer James Horner, during the recording of the Brainstorm soundtrack in London.

TRUMBULL'S BRAINSTORM 24
We quiz special effects whiz Douglas Trumbull about the making of Brainstorm, his second movie as a director.

STARBURST DATA SHEET 31
The first of a regular series. To kick off our subject is an alternative "Fantasy Female", veteran character actress Una O'Connor, best known for her roles in the 1930s Universal horrors.

OPINION 32
Regular Video columnist Barry Forshaw has a few things to get off his chest particularly in the area of video censorship.

STRANGE CREATOR 34
Alan Jones interviews the writer director behind both Strange Behaviour (aka, Dead Kids) and the forthcoming instant classic, Strange Invaders.



STARBURST REVIEW SECTION 38
A wealth of film, video, book and record reviews – everything the fantasy fan needs to know when it comes to spending money. Plus TV Zone and It's Only A Movie, regular critical columns by Richard Holliss and John Brosnan.

STARBURST DATA BANK 46
A motherlode of trivia and fantasy information for the inquisitive reader. Keep those questions coming . . .

Starburst LETTERS

Starburst Letters, Marvel Comics Ltd., 23 Redan Place, Queensway, London W2 4SA.

SUMMER FRIGHTS

Starburst 61, 62 and **63** must be the finest issues of **Starburst** ever printed. Not only did you give superb coverage of the major movies released this summer but detailed interviews with cast and crew as well.

The interview with Anthony Perkins in issue 63 was great, and was further enhanced by the stills used. (*Psycho II*, by the way, must be one of the finest horror films I've ever seen). *Strange Invaders* really does sound promising thanks to Alan Jones' review and, again, the effective use of stills.

Starburst 62's coverage of the Spielberg/Landis movie, *The Twilight Zone*, was good and it was refreshing to see excellent coverage of the TV series.

A much better movie than *The Twilight Zone* was John Badham's superb action adventure, *Blue Thunder*. Dan O'Bannon's well crafted script, the acting and the sheer, raw action make the film a wow of a winner and many thanks to **Starburst** for the terrific coverage in issue 61.

It's refreshing to see that there is more fantasy on TV recently. Apart from some major movies like *Star Wars, The Final Countdown, Battle Beyond the Stars* and others there has also been re-runs of the best science fiction series ever made such as *The Twilight Zone, The Prisoner* (my favourite), *Journey Into The Unknown* and *Boris Karloff Presents* (my favourite episode being *The Grim Reaper* with William Shatner). All we need now is for the Beeb to show *Star Trek* again.

Andrew Evison,
Grimsby,
South Humberside.

A SATISFIED READER

I have read *Starlog* and *Fangoria*, *Cinefex* and *Fantasy Empire*, but every time I always come back to **Starburst**. I think it is the best fantasy film magazine out.

Starburst is a friendly magazine and I really enjoy reading it. I think it is laid out well and there is always something for everyone in it. It is much better value for money than *Starlog* or *Fangoria*.

I really like John Brosnan's *It's Only A Movie* column. I think it is really funny. I especially like Tony Crawley's interviews with Harrison Ford, who I think has not changed much since he was interviewed way back in **Starburst 3**, before he became really famous.

Pauline Davidson,
West Kirkby,
Merseyside.

LUST FOR GORE

I thought that I would drop you a line after reading the interview with Michael Medved in **Starburst 63**, regarding his comments about Herschel Gordon Lewis. As regular readers of the American horror magazine *Fangoria* will know, Lewis, far from being in jail, is alive and well and living in Miami, Florida, and when last heard from was planning to return to film-making after an eleven year absence. Lewis, in fact, denies that he ever was in jail, but admits to some 'bad business judgements'.

Over the last couple of years a cult has grown up over Lewis' films in America. His films are being issued on video and a book has just been published about him. In Britain Lewis' films remain virtually unseen and it is now twenty years since *Blood Feast* was made. I understand that *Two Thousand Maniacs* (1964) was recently submitted to the British censor, but that they requested cuts and the distributors then backed out, although it is, apparently, available on video. I am sure that I am not the only person in this country who would like to see these films. Incidentally, Channel Four's *A Midsummer Night's Tube* used what appeared to be the warning prologue from *Blood Feast* to introduce the Tubes act to viewers.

In addition to Lewis, *Fangoria* has also published articles about such as Andy Milligan, Ted V. Mikels and Ray Dennis Steckler. Mikel's *The Corpse Grinders* (1971) was released in Britain in 1973, but only after ten minutes had been cut. As for Milligan (director of *Bloodthirsty Butchers* (1969) and *Torture Dungeon* (1970), among others) and Steckler, their names are pretty obscure in America, so they may never see the light of day here.

Ray Dennis Steckler's best known work is *The Incredibly Strange Creatures Who Stopped Living and Became Mixed-Up Zombies* (1963, also known as *The Teenage Psycho Meets Bloody Mary*). His latest film is *The Hollywood Strangler Meets the Skid Row Slasher*, which developed out of a film lecture he gave to students. Again I haven't seen any of these films, but would very much like to.

Mark Young,
Allesley Park,
Coventry.

The trouble with getting to see Herschel Gordon Lewis films, Mark, is that unless there's an independent repertory cinema near you (there may be, even in Coventry!) you're out of luck. But to be honest, you're not missing much. We've only seen one Lewis picture, Blood Feast, *which is not a lost "cult" classic, merely a bad film made by apparently talentless people. There's still only one* Plan 9 From Outer Space!

Top: *A scene from Herschel Gordon Lewis' infamous* Blood Feast. Middle: *A publicity shot of Rod Serling from his classic TV show.* Above: *Cayman, the reptile warrior, and Kelvin, the thermal energy twins from* Battle Beyond the Stars.

CONSPIRACY!

I went to see *Blue Thunder* last night. I liked it! What I didn't like was having to sit through nearly an hour of what seemed to be an almost completely boring recruitment film for the Para-

troop Regiment. (Who am I kidding? It was mind-bogglingly boring.) My own fault I suppose, I'm just one of those nosey people who can't bear to miss anything, in case it turns out to be good.

The only thing that kept me from falling asleep during this tedious time was wondering where these incredibly uninteresting shorts come from. Do the distributors send them out to be shown with specific films? Or do cinemas have stockpiles of the things in the back room somewhere? If so, I would be doing everyone a favour by sneaking back with a box of matches . . . It's okay, I'm only joking!

Alex Green,
Ebbw Vale,
Gwent.

We have this theory, Alex. We think that the cinema owners don't know where these boring second features come from. We do! They're made by tv and video companies and sneaked out onto the cinema circuits. The result being that the audiences are half bored to death and run screaming back to the safety of their living rooms and the relatively controllable entertainment of their tv and video sets. Neat, eh? And all this time the film industry has been wondering why their audiences have been staying away in droves . . .

THINGS THAT GO BUMP . . .

Although this might seem a bit belated, I would like to voice my opinions of the film *Poltergeist*. About a year ago, I was sitting comfortably in the secure atmosphere of my local ABC, about to sample the delights of *The Wall*, when something very promising appeared on the screen – the trailer for *Poltergeist*. I say "promising", because that's how it seemed. A stiff-faced American doctor gave a definition of the word and then a dark, brooding voice-over stated, "The first real ghost story." I was quite over the moon (of Yavin, naturally). At last, somebody was tackling the paranormal. What a change from maniacs with assorted lethal instruments.

Above: *Three scenes of ghostly goings-on in* Poltergeist, *directed by Tobe Hooper and produced by Steven Spielberg.*

However, being only a little shorter than knee-high to a Jawa, I was unable to see the movie at the flicks and only recently managed to acquire it on video.

With trembling fingers I fed the video recorder its magnetic food and sat back. Two hours later, I was still sitting back, wondering if I had accidentally taken out assorted, spliced-together out-takes from *Close Encounters, The Evil Dead* and *Chicago Story*. After waiting so long, it confounded me how this movie could treat the subject of the paranormal with all the subtlety of a cross between Blackpool Illuminations and a Royal Occasion firework display. I mean, let's get serious Steve and Tobe. Val Lewton would become a gibbering cabbage if he saw some of the more blatent touches. It's obvious that the combined trademarks of these two directors (mind-blowing light shows and close-up gratuitous gore) just do not add up to a serious attempt on the subject of poltergeists.

In fact, the very title "Poltergeist" is a downright con. From what I could discover from the sparse plot, the little girl is being used as a channel for certain destructive forces emanating from the dead. This is a diversion from my definition of the word, that is, a noisy spirit which favours wall-banging, levitation and telekinesis, but not resurrecting the dead, animating trees and dolls and vapourising houses. I nearly died of disbelief when the "shocking" revelation about the housing estate being built on a cemetery unfolded.

Jibes aside, I found the film hollow and lacking in depth of story of characterisation. I found the most effective visual trick was the moving stool, a rare example of genuine poltergeist behaviour. As for grinning corpses and people dismantling their faces, it just seemed too ridiculous for words.

Anyway, keep up the superlative work with **Starburst**. Be seeing you . . .

Ian Johnson,
Southwell,
Notts.

The Return of FLICKERS by Tim Quinn & Dicky Howett

Tony Crawley's THINGS TO COME

Great Gremlins!

So, what's going to be the all-out, super-duper No 1 movie of this year of 1980rwell . . . *Dune*? Yes, yes, Dino's *Dune* has to stand a chance. Any advance on *Dune*? Do I hear Indiana Jones II . . . ? That can't be far behind, or more likely in front. And what's that over there – why, a whole bunch of Steve King shakers! Tarzan, anyone? Do I have any takers for *Greystoke*? No, well, it may not be all that bad, once they decided to release it, that is . . . So what's it going to be?

I'll tell you what. My bet is *Gremlins* is going to be hard to beat. Thus far, all news (much less, stills) of Joe Dante's film – a Spielberg production has been kept very close to the collective chests of the brothers Warner. Certain filmland hot-shots have seen sections of it and come away rhapsodising. "It's in the same class as *E.T.* and *Superman*," says one Australian distributor, after being privvy to twenty minutes of Dante's infernals, "takes the state of the art ten notches higher!" Good for you, Joe . . .

Bond Battle (Cont'd)

I think one can safely say it's official now. Filmgoers prefer Sean Connery to Roger Moore as James Bond. Sean's comeback after twelve years, *Never Say Never Again* may well be too long, too cutesy-jokey in places (not Sean's), with the most abysmal score possible, (all Michel Legrand jazz instead of Jerry Goldsmith or Bill Conti power) and wasting blonde damsel Kim Bassinger – but Americans first, French second, have succumbed in droves to the *Thunderball*/re-treads. Across the Atlantic, for example, Connery created a record opening weekend for any Bond movie – beating *Octopussy's* opening $8 million figures by close to a million.

France had much the same story (where *Octopussy* didn't even start as well as *For Your Eyes Only*), following a splash premiere in nearby Monaco and a retrospective of Connery films at the Paris Cinematheque, among other tie-ins and merchandising coups.

The official Bond producer, Cubby Broccoli, was in Paris for *Octopussy's* opening, a matter of weeks before *Never's*. "We've had competition since we did *Dr No*," said Cubby, putting a brave face on things, "and we're not worried about it now." He also revealed more than he wanted to when he said his legal battle with the *Thunderball*/*Never* man Kevin McClory over who has which rights to what Ian Fleming 007 stories is far from finished – but that this struggle does not affect Cubby's long friendship with . . . Sean!

One wonders if this might mean that Broccoli and Connery may be getting back together again for the next Eon Bond, *From A View To A Kill* (turn that one into a song, someone!). Roger Moore says he's not making it, but then Moore says that every year. No doubt the final positions of Moore's sixth Bond outing and Connery's 007th will settle the matter. After all, if we prove we prefer Connery – we should get him. If, of course, he's willing.

Bond's 16th

Counting *Casino Royal* and Lazenby's lame effort, the next Broccoli Bond will be the 16th. John Glen will be directing – that's his third in succession, equalling Guy Hamilton's 1971-74 run of *Diamonds Are Forever, Live and Let Die* and *The Man with The Golden Gun*. Opening date for the so far Bond-less Bond film is the summer of '85.

Carrie On . . . Leia

"I'm resigned to the fact that I will be (known for evermore as Princess Leia). I thought I was going to end up as Tammy! – Carrie Fisher.

Where's Tarz?

My worries (alas, so true about *Krull*) about certain of the going-ape effects in *Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes* are coming true. Instead of opening for America's Christmas, Hugh Hudson's film has been placed on a back burner for later this year. The reason? Warner Brothers' double-talk Press-agentry tags it as "due to an extremely complex post-production schedule." Read into that, what you will. I see it as trying yet again to solve the problem of some of the apes looking like . . . well, guys in ape-suits. To be continued . . .

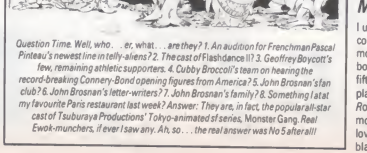
Change of Hero

Not so long ago, I suggested that Phil Kaufman's new screen hero, *Jim-grimm*, spelled dangers for Tony Anthony's next 3-D space jockey, known, indeed hyped by Cannon, as Jimbojudd. I wuz right. When he started shooting in Italy in January, complete with the latest 3-D flying optical frame system, Tony's heroic figure in *Escape From Beyond* became known, indeed hyped by Cannon, as . . . Jalico. Sounds like something you keep the toilets clean with.

Little 3-D Shop

Now that his *Little Shop of Horrors* musical (**Starburst 63**) has opened in Britain, writer Howard Ashman has begun work on scripting the movie version for his superstar backers. They're Steven Spielberg (producer) and Martin Scorsese (director). And yes, as rumoured and confirmed here before, the movie-musical of the old Roger Corman movie, will be in 3-D.

"Ok, so it wasn't a great film," admits Ashman, "but horror movies are the last respectable form of melodrama and this one is a parable!" He will not be attending the Australian premiere of the musical, nor any others springing up all over the globe. "I'm leaving it well alone," he says. "This has been two years of my life. It's allowed me to buy a word processor and not worry about the groceries, but enough is enough."



Question Time. Well, who. . .er, what. . . are they? 1. An audition for Frenchman Pascal Pinteau's newest line in telly-aliens? 2. The cast of Flashdance II? *3. Geoffrey Boycott's few, remaining athletic supporters. 4. Cubby Broccoli's team on hearing the record-breaking Connery-Bond opening figures from America? 5. John Brosnan's fan club? 6. John Brosnan's letter-writers? 7. John Brosnan's family? 8. Something I atat my favourite Paris restaurant last week? Answer: They are, in fact, the popular all-star cast of Tsuburaya Productions' Tokyo-animated sf series,* Monster Gang. *Real Ewok-munchers, if ever I saw any. Ah, so. . . the real answer was No 5 after all!*

Dune doings

Dune is busting out all over. If you want statistics, I've got 'em. Sixty-five sets. Twenty stars – from Sting to Freddie Jones, from *Blade Runner's* Sean Young to *Logan's Run's* Richard Jordan, from *The Boat's* Jugen Prochnow to everything's Max Von Sydow, from *Krull's* Francesca Annis to presenter Dino De Do-Dah's wife and producer Rafaella De Laurentiis' Momma, Silvana Mangano. Behind the scenes, every other ace available for a long sojourn down Mexicali way; from *E.T.'s* Carlo Rambldi to *2001's* Tony Masters, everything's Albert Whitlock to *Raiders'* Oscar-winner Kit West. All this for a budget of officially $40 million, which is said to be somewhat closer to $60 million.

"I don't see any of the money so I don't ever worry about it," says the director, David Lynch, of *Eraserhead* fame. He has lately finished three years on bringing Frank Herbertland to the screen. "The pressure, strangely enough, was stronger on *The Elephant Man* than it was on this," adds Lynch, "because that was my first picture." *Dune* happens to be his first in colour. Special colour, much influenced for two of the *Dune* worlds by a visit he made to Venice with Dino. Lynch is using his *Elephant Man* camera man again, Freddie Francis (a director in his own right as well, of course, what with various Hammer specials and *They Came from Outer Space* in 1967). For much of the shoot, Francis and Lynch used a Lightflex box in front of Freddie's lenses. "This reflects filters but doesn't affect highlights," explains Lynch. (We're getting so technical this month). "It sort of blends things and warms the colours, which produces a rich look."

It was Rafaella, Dino's daughter, who chose Lynch for the job. "Dino had never seen *Eraserhead* and if he had, he probably wouldn't have hired me. Dino saw *Elephant Man* but all his kids saw *Eraserhead* in his living room and I think he just walked through and saw about ten minutes of it at most." Sounds like Rafaella might be bringing some credit back to the family name. Just think if *she* managed to produce *Flash Gordon*, we might have seen Nic Roeg's version . . .

More Dunes

I understand that David Lynch's *Dune* contract calls for him to mke up to three more films from Frank Herbert's (four) books. The author is working on his fifth now. But next time out, Lynch is planning his own fun film, *Ronnie Rocket*. He calls it a poor man's effects movie. And back in monochrome. "I love colour but there's nothing like black-and-white."

Carrie On . . . Vader

"He's not a real nice guy. Not your standard relationships. He has funny hair. He's not black. He may be neuter. A lot of this is open to people's interpretations. Maybe he's gay. Vader is gay and he's embarrassed about some tattoo he had put on his face. He got drunk one night. No, he has some kind of problem with facial hair . . ." – Carrie Fisher.

State of the Art

By the time you read this, there will be more than 40 million video recorders in world homes – offices, factories, film and TV studios, schools, hospitals, even some free-thinking churches. So far the VCR bug has bitten (and deep) into 63 countries. America, inevitably, tops the list with about nine or ten million sets. Japan (who else?) rates second place, about three million ahead of third place Britain's 6 million total. Next in line: West Germany, France, Australia. Russia is well down the list at around 200,000 VCR's; even little Ethiopia has 4,000. But the deepest bite has to be in Kuwait where the current figure of 300,000 sets means that 92% of Kuwaiti homes have VCRs in the corner. And depending which side you listen to, the Moral Majority in the States and elsewhere or the ripped-off movie combines, we're all watching either porno or pirated movies. C'mon own up – which is you?

E.T. P.M.?

Steven Spielberg can make *E.T.* in a total night shoot now if he wants to – or can stop going to bed with the tv at 8pm. Universal Studios, which always had a touch of the circus anyway what with its grand tour for the kind of discamera tourists who only ever see movies on tv, now has its own big top. And being in Hollywood, that means a really huge big top. A million dollars' worth of close on five acres of vinyl-covered tarpaulin can now cover the 200,000 sq ft of open-air city streets sets on the back lot. The tenting enables directors to shoot day-for-night all day long if they want to. Walter Hill tried it out first for thirty days of night scenes in his *Mad Maxy* number, *Streets of Fire* (see feature elsewhere this issue). For Hill to have shot all that on some real location, even in some crummy, slummy area of any chosen town would have been extremely noisy, not to say expensive. At Universal, he could control his environment and all went well. Another advantage for night shooting by day is in the use of kids in a cast – they can't really be working after 6.30pm.

While the tenting sounds very Spielbergian, shades of *his* controlled environment in his Mobile hangar for *CE3K*, etc, not to mention the tenting of the entire Elliott family manse in *E.T.*, it's an old Hollywood notion. Studios made use of such gigantic tarpaulins for their sets in the '30s and '40s, but never on a scale like this. Compared to the 200,000 sq ft sets able to be covered, Universal's largest soundstage, for example, measures 30,000 sq ft. For directors, cast and crew, the big tarp will mean (a) summertime shooting under vinyl is cooler than under LA's sun and (b) if they're all inside the tent, none of those gawping, shutterbugger Tour-ists can see and bother them.

Spielberg's Dad(s)

Spielberg patriarchs are in demand. While Dennis Weaver enters soap country as a widower with three lively daughters, among other weekly hassles at *Emerald Point NAS*, the *Poltergeist* Poppa, Craig T. Nelson, is heading up an USAF brood in a similar dose of detergent drama, *Air Force*. Only real difference, Craig's show is set in the 60s and he has a wife – Vadim find Cindy Pickett. This is a second double-up act, for Nelson. As *E.T.'s* father-image, Peter Coyote, was shooting *Strangers Kiss* for director Matthew Chapman, Craig was making *All The Right Moves* for Scorsese-cameraman turned director, Michael Chapman.

. . . And Kids

Steven's kid stars are doing okay, too. Henry Thomas has complete Richard Franklin's thriller, *Cloak and Dagger* and *CE3K's* Cary Guffey is tackling some *Night Shadows*. Only Spielbaby in trouble is *Poltergeist* tot, Heather O'Rourke. She's been dropped from *Happy Days* on the box. Tough old life being sacked at age seven.

And His Step-son!

All systems go, at long last, for the *Cocoon* sf movie long planned by Spielberg's first one-"son", Robert Zemeckis. This is the movie, one of eleven turned down by Sherry Lansing when she was in charge of 20th Century-Fox production, which made Spielberg's *Jaws* mentors, Richard Zanuck and David Brown, leave Fox in a huff and set up shop at Warner Brothers. Well, the new Fox production chief, Joe Wizan, has taken another look at the Zemeckis script and given it – and therefore Zanuck/Brown – the green light.

Zemeckis is one of The Two Bobs given their Hollywood start by Stevyn back in the days of *I Wanna Hold Your Hand*, scripting *1941* and the *Used Cars* comedy. Bob's more recent step-father has been the actor-producer Michael Douglas. Impressed with Bob's flair for action and comedy in *Used Cars*, Douglas hired Zemeckis for his romantic thriller, *Romancing the Stone*, down in Mexico. It's because of his good work on that Fox feature, that Joe Wizan brushed the dust off *Cocoon*, made his deals and gave everyone a May 1 shooting date in Florida.

Carrie On . . . Breasts

"I have some. I have two. For Star Wars, they had me tape down my breasts, because there are no breasts in space. Camera tape, gaffer tape . . . ! At the end of every day, I was going to draw a lottery and one of crew could rip off the tape. I never did it, though" – Carrie Fisher.

Left: *Poor little Heather O'Rourke. After a spell as a regular on tv's* Happy Days *she's been dropped from the cast. Redundency is no smiling metter when you're only seven. (See " . . . And Kids").* Right: *Craig T. Nelson into* Air Force *and Michael Chepmen's* The Right Moves. *With more to come, no doubt. (See "Spielberg's Dads").*

Fantasy TV Women

It's Sandahl Bergman vs Sybil Danning among the latest crop of video cassettes from America. And, surprisingly – perhaps? – Sandahl is the winner. No, surprisingly is right, because Sybil's vid, *Famous T & A* (the title will become apparent) comes schock full of movie clips and out-takes of naked film and tv names (Ursula Andress, Ornella Mutti, Bardot, Birkin, the late Claudia Jennings, Jackie Bisset, D.D. Winter's in Rick Baker's *Tanya's Island* assignment, etc). They're all fine (very fine) but Sybil makes sure neither her T nor her A appears in any old clips and introduces the vid in far too coy a fashion. Sandahl's tape is 14 minutes shorter (just an hour) and dances up a storm in her own version of Bob Fosse-cum-*Conan* gymnastics and, well, in the end there's just more body in her show. Well, no wonder, it *is* called *Sandahl Bergman's Body*. That'll stop Jane Fonda demonstrating dan-cercises anymore!

Gold is . . . Hot

It's going to be a long, cold summer. Nothing but ice ahead. That's the '84 filmeteorogical forecast. Just think of it . . . Tim Hutton in *Iceman*, Robert Urich leaving tv for *Ice Pirates*, Willie Nelson's *Coming Out of the Ice*, *Superman* producer Pierre Spengler is preparing *The Ice People* and *Diva's* Jean-Jacques Beinex has promised us *Ice Maiden*. It's hardly surprising therefore that Iceland, itself, is ready to launch its most expensive production. Ironically, it's the only film of the group which doesn't have ice in the title . . . just on the location. The million-dollar project is *Atomic Station*, very much an anti-nuke movie from the novel by the county's Nobel Prize-winning Halldor Laxness. Due at the Cannes festival, I hear, the science-fact thriller is directed in English (and Icelandic) by Thornstein Johnsson with two British-trained Icelander actors, Gunnar Eyjofisson and Jonina Scott.

And guess what . . . just in on the LA-wire: *Iceman* Tim Hutton is now making . . . *The Falcon and The Snowman*. Add *Santa Claus* to that lot and yeah, going to be a chilly year in the front stalls. Wrap up well. Or take a good friend with you.

Leaping Bedrooms!

Look out *Doctor Who* . . . The Danes are getting into the tele-fantasy business. About time we got something other than bacon from them. The Japanese are getting – yawn! – terribly boring. The French are out to lunch; they have the SPFX talent but don't know how to use (or pay properly for) it. And who needs any more Italian rip-offs of Lucas and Corman?

Søren Buss, of Danmarks Radio, has been telling me about Danish tv's first attempt at an sf series. *Crash* is for youngsters and appears to be somewhat related to *Time Bandits* and maybe West Germany's *Never-Ending Story*. So what! Everyone has to kick off someplace. *Crash* (which won't, I hope) is about four-and-a-half hours of fun 'n' games thrills 'n' spills in space and time with a just pre-teenage hero called Birger. He dreams up his own adventures in bed. Quite logical, therefore, wouldn't you agree Mr Spock, that it's Birger's very bedroom which takes off and transports him around the galaxies – for 20 minutes a show over thirteen weeks.

Showing the Danish team's miniature effects unit (I'm not altogether sure if Søren meant miniature effects

►

Tony Crawley's THINGS TO COME

or a miniature team), is British SPFX man, Bill Pearson. He worked on *Flash Gordon* and *Outland*. But wait! Before you start booing and badmouthing his expertise, Bill also toiled on *Alien*. Good enough credentials for me. And for the Danes.

Exit: Vid-Games?

And so the video-games proved to be little more than last year's fad – electronic yo-yos or skateboads – after all. In America, at least, the games have had it. Eaten by their own Pac-Man-like greed. The once biggest vid-game combine, Atari – remember Space Invaders and Asteroids? – lost $356 million at least last year and their main rivals, Mattel, saw $201 million go right down the tubes. Their profits used to run to more than double the Mattel loss-figure.

Oh the games still sell – or the good 'uns do. But not in large enough quantities, and not, of course, at the old 1979 prices. In short, the new fad which Hollywood tried to milk like crazy is suffering the old Hollywood syndrome – dull games (like movies) have no buyers. These days, its the potential mega-movies only that do really well. Same in the arcades. Hence, animator Don Bluth has the real winner of the hour (or in vid-games, that's probably more like a minute) with his *Dragon's Lair* number, the first vid-game to use a laser disk to have a less computerish and more film-like image. You get to operate – or be – the hero, Dirk The Daring and kill all manner of baddies, including the dragon, of course, to rescue a princess. Damn sight more fun than the now old-fashioned Pac-Man, Donkey Kong and the rest.

So what's the new in-thing? Why home-computers, of course. I mean . . . *haven't* you seen *WarGames?*

Enter: The Eddroids

Video-games may be all but dead and buried, but George Lucas, no less, is proving what I've long preached on these pages. There's life aplenty in video-disks, spurned by all you VCRers. He's using disks as the mainstay of a new video-editing system, tried and tested on his own movies (you never saw the joins, right?) and to be sold to other studios the world over by April. The machine is called an EdDroid, after a certain couple of droids we all know. No name, as yet, for the company issuing them – an outfit formed by Lucasfilm and California's Convergence Corporation, which has been into video-tape editing systems for eight years. Judging by Lucasfilm hype, though, film editors will soon have a name for their latest benefactor – Great!

EdDroid is the first tangible (or public) result of three years' research and development by Lucas' Computer Division – in conjunction with Convergence. It's loftily described as "state of the art computer technology and advanced human engineering to create a system designed to allow maximum artistic and techological flexibility." Phew! Sounds as in C-3PO wrote that. Breaking all that gunge down, George's computer manager, Robert J. Doris, says the machine, complete with its own built-in micro-computer, will cut post-production editing time greatly.

Doris-speak is muddling to a non-expert like me. I gather he's *not* referring to the cutting of dailes, rushes – printed takes – but travail on large amounts of edited material. The editors transfer this to some form of video – and this is where the laser video-disk flips back into prominence. Disks can be scanned more rapidly than the sequential medium of video-tape. The system's computer records everything and compiles a file of the film's editing lists. Therefore, while still at his console, an editor can end up with a list for use during the usual form of manual cutting. The disk (or disko?) speed enables edited material to be viewed and checked much faster than rethreading film on the moviola or trying to locate set sequences somewhere on video-tape. "User-friendly", is how Robert Doris dubs the system. "We studied the way film editors work and built a system that they could manipulate comfortably." That can't have been difficult at Lucasfilm. Not with the amount of hours George spends at his beloved cutting console. If the EdDroid was really designed around him (like a new suit), world editors will soon be able to say they're editing just like Lord Lucas. *Exactly* like him. Unless they're taller, shorter, thinner, fatter than George, of course.

Carrie On . . . Corp

"I'm a corporation now. Deliquesce. Paul Simon (*her husband*) named it for me. It means melting. He's into etymology, as am I, slightly. He knows all these real strange words. That's the strangest of them all." – Carrie Fisher.

Videos Please!

We can all compile a list of the films we'd love to cherish on cassette. Our personal Top 50, 100 . . . 550 films. The Museum of Modern Art in New York has been screening two extraordinary compilation movies that immediately move up into my Top 20. Made by the French archive at Bois d'Arcy, they are 124-minutes of the magic of *Melies and His Contemporaries*, featuring 36 shorts (cira 1986-1909) by the screen's first true fantastist and visual effectichign and those in (or out) of his shadows . . . and 139 minutes of 24 short examples of *The Beginning of Colour, Sound and Film Animation*, which, naturally, includes more of Georges Melies work and colour-tinted films by the Lumiere brothers dated 1910! Fascinating compendiums, both; and well worthy of a cassette deal, although they could do with a music track by Carl Davis or someone. Here, though, is the genesis of today's fantasy movies from Melies' *A Trip To The Moon* (1902) and it's remake a year later by Ferdinand Zecca and Lucien Nonguet, plus Georges' *Man With the Rubber Head* (1902), *An Impossible Voyage* (1904) and if just to prove that not only Melies, but his films were French, *After The Ball . . . The Tub*, which must be the first nude bath scene on celluloid, circa 1897. If the National Film Theatre pick 'em up for a screening after their MOMA debuts, don't miss either of them.

Cronen-Book

Toronto's version of the British Film Institute – the similarly 50-year-old Academy of Canadian Cinema – finally enters the publishing game with *The Shape of Rage*. It's the pilot book of their planned "two of three books annually about Canadian filmmakers and Canadian film issues." And with a title like that who else could it be devoted to but . . . David Cronenberg. From the hype of the Academy's communications director, Maria Topalovich, the books is a comprehensive, anthology of essays, perspectives, analyses and stills of cinema according to Cronenberg – from *Stereo* (1969) to his latest, *The Dead Zone*. Piers Handling edits contributions from such authors, critics and plain old Cronenberg watchers as Robin Hood, Timothy Lucas, John Harkness and others. The 216 page book also features an in-depth Cronenterview plus bibliography and filmography.

For genuine bookworms, let me add the book is published (and distributed) in conjunction with General Publishing in Canada and by New York Zoetrope in America. Here? I've not heard yet. I've not seen the tome, either, but, alas, I've read one review which denounces six of the articles as being "weighty, academic" pieces – with only Maurice Yacowar's being bright and breezy. Well, I said the Academy was Canada's version of the BFI, so what do you expect?

Cronen-Movie

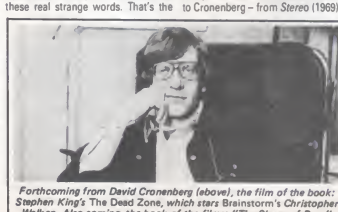
Far better reviews, Stateside thus far, for Cronenberg's *Dead Zone* movie, hailed as one of the better film versions of a Steve King book. In common with Steve's book, Cronenberg tends to take things easier on the viscreal front (apart from Nicholas Campbell's suicide and some terrific flashbacks/forwards). Still, with *Scanners* and *Videodrome* finally out of his system, maybe its time Cronenberg got more into in-depth characterisation and suspense. As you'll probably know, Doug Trumbull's *Brainstorm* star, Christopher Walken, is Johnny Smith, the guy out of a five-year coma with a case of phenomenal second-sight. Herbert Lom is his medico, Brooke Adams is his girlfriend, and Martin Sheen, Tom Skerrit, Anthony Zerbe and young Simon Craig are also involved in the ongoing frightmare. Cronenberg obviously loves it, because . . .

Cronen-Cinema

After a monumental cock-up, which meant *Dead Zone* wasn't booked into enough Toronto cinemas – it was in fewer than any Cronenberg film since *Fast Company* – Paramount have rented an entie theatre to run the film in. And Cronenberg has spent $7,000 of his own cash to install Dolby Sound in the 750-seater Crest Theatre. Anything to beat the *Videodrome* curse . . .

Still More King

There are still three more King movies due out this year: John Carpenter's *Christine*, Mark Lester's *Firestarter* (Martin Sheen has lately joined that cast to replace the ailing Burt Lancaster) and of course, Romero's *The Stand*. You can now add a fourth. Roger Corman's old company, New World are is handling a $3 million version of *Children of the Corn*, scripted by George Goldsmith from a King shortie. This is the King tale which nearly ran away. Last time I asked Steve about it, he was none too sure who had the rights anymore, as it had been optioned so often it had, in Mrs



Forthcoming from David Cronenberg (above), the film of the book: Stephen King's The Dead Zone, *which stars* Brainstorm's *Christopher Walken. Also coming, the book of the films: "The Shape of Rage" is edited by Piers Handling and covers the Cronenberg movies from* Stereo *to* The Dead Zone *(See "Cronen-Book" for the details.)*

King's words become an annuity. Fritz Kiersche, totally unknown to me, is directing the movie with Peter Horton and Linda Hamilton . . . in case you've not heard, Steve!

Miller's Tale

After Fritz Kiersche, here's another new name for you. Maybe. Neal Miller is a film producer in Chicago, where he has his own company called Rubicon. He's lately hit the news by buying back his own project from the PBS tv network, so that he can release *The Roommate* as a movie. Nice to hear of someone believing in their toil. Can't say I'd heard of Miller until checking the files. He could be a name to watch. So far, he's made his name shooting short stories by such folk as Shirley Jackson, Ray Bradbury and Kurt Vonnegut Jr. No one turned-on by these writers can be all bad.

Home is the Hauer

Rather like the Aussies with Mel Gibson, the Dutch have been waiting a long time for their No 1 star to come home. Well, they've got him now. So has the director who helped propel him to international status. Rutger Hauer, the *Blade Runner* heavy, is making *Flesh and Blood* for his director mate, Paul Verhoeven – which also means, obviously, that Paul has picked up Hollywood backing for the film. And indeed, for a few others. The Verhoeven schedule also includes an Agatha Christie number, *Death Comes As The End* (ain't dat da truth), scripted by Anthony Shaffer, and . . . the H.P. Lovecraft story, *The Thing on the Doorstep*.

ETs: Early Takes

Coming this way all too soon: *The Hunchback of U.C.L.A.* Alan Katz will star in his own script, backed by the producers of Sigourney Weaver's new hit, *Deal of the Century*, and last year's big sleeper hit across the pond, *Risky Business* . . . Maybe it's not so bad then . . . Roger (*The Sender*) Christian planning *2084* for an outfit called World Film Alliance, which sound like a Darth Vader combine . . . Same outfit is also promising Sandy Howard's long-announced underwater-*2001: Odysea*. We'll sea! . . . Tanya Roberts started being *Sheena, Queen of the Jungle* in Kenya last December . . . Most popular Yuletide gift over there is the half-price bargain pack of *Jaws I, II and III* (but not 3-D, you see). That was matched over here by the £19.99 *Raiders* cassette. *Flashdance* will be going at about the same price, I gather, on the same Guild Home Video label . . . *Dark Crystal* due in the RCA/Columbia boxes, although our Thorn/EMI has it for America . . . *Octopussy's* songstress Rita Coolidge now warbling theme of Burt Reynold's, *The Man Who Loved Women*. But is that any improvement?

Rubber Stars! Empire Strikes Back's *Yoda and the title star of* E.T. *(see "Carrie on . . . Yoda vs E.T.")*

Carrie On. . . Yoda vs E.T.

"Yoda's a little better looking. E.T. seems like a much more pleasant person. He seems real nice. But Yoda is a teacher and I like learning things . . . I like Yoda, he's smaller than I am." – Carrie Fisher.

ETs – Extra Takes

Elephant Man make-up magician Christopher Tucker working on *Company of Wolves* second movie from the Boorman-backed Irish director of *Angel*, novelist Neil Jordan . . . Familiar face from the Kevin Connor/John Dark lands where time forget, etc, John Ratzenberger, now among the *Cheers* tv cast in the United States . . . Paul Bartel has begun a new black comedy (what else?), *Not for Publication*. The facts are though. He's shooting in New York and Dallas with Mrs DePalma, Nancy Allen and the *American Werewolf in London*, David Naughton . . . Mork's Mindy, Pam Dawbar, is alive and well and preparing her new tv series . . . *Hundra* director Matt Cimber smiling broadly. His 1979 film, *Seven* (ex-*Five*) *Graves for Rogan* finally released as *A Time To Die* . . . Canadian tv series, *Mr Microchip* does its best to explain computers to kids. For adults, Dr Michael Crichton, director of *Coma, Looker*, has written *Electronic Life or: How To Think About Computers*. "Fear of computers is normal," says the doc. His prescription? "A certain amount of kicking and screaming is useful" . . . Hot news from Tellywood – Paramount is spending $40 million on the next season of tv fodder. Just think, David Puttnam could make ooh . . . 15 movies with that money. Dino de Laxative could make . . . three?

In Memorium

On a satellite hook-up from the Tennesse location of his latest Hollywood movie, Mel Gibson appeared at Sydney's Australian Film Awards show to announce the new Byron Kennedy Award. This has been devised by Mel, George Miller and others as a permanent tribute to their *Mad Max* producer buddy, killed when his helicopter crashed in July. The idea behind the award is to back talented new directors down-under. A jury of film pros will choose an annual winner – someone "whose pursuit of excellence" matches Kennedy's flair. The trophy is being backed and administered by a Kennedy Trust set up by George Miller, the *Mad Max* scripter Terry Hayes, Mel Gibson and other down-under filmmakers, and tv and film companies, plus Warner Brothers and Steven Spielberg. Good to know that Byron will not be forgotten . . .

Miller's Movie

George Miller, meantime, has begun his first full-length Hollywood movie – in Yugoslavia (just when Phil Edwards had gone back home down-under to meet with him). George's film has him back in the air; minus John Lithgow's thingies outside the window. *The Aviator* has a good cast, too. Chris Reeve – I can take him or leave him; Tyne Daly, direct from winning her Emmy tv award for *Cagney and Lacey* (just after the series was cancelled); and the absolutely ravishing Rosanna Arquette, from *The Executioner's Song* and John Sayles' *Baby It's You*. I'd fly in anything to see a new Rosanna movie.

Happy 16th

Opening and closing with *The Hunger* and *Jaws 3-D*, Spain's – or should I say Catalan's – Stiges fantasy fest celebrated its 16th birthday in real style. The event has finally come into its own, with hefty backing from the Catalan provincial government after 15 years of trying to pay for itself locally. The event's new head man, Antonio Rafales, managed to keep up a heady programme of five movies a day, oldies and newies, ranging from special lam screenings of *Pandora And The Flying Dutchman* (1951), *The Dunwich Horror* (1970) and *Tarantula* (1955) a retrospective of the work of Hollywood make-up giant Jack P. Pierce (1889-1968), who worked on all of Hollywood's Frankenstein, Dracula, Mummy and Wolf Man movies, a bunch of "information" highlights like *Cujo, Parasites* and *The Car That Ate Paris* . . . and then the competition entries.

All went exceeding well (except for those golden oldies turning up in Italian-dubbed prints) and the awards were, for once, seen to be earned. In particular, I've no quarrel with Best Film and Best Director nods going to Luc Besson for his terrific French black-white sf thriller, *Le Dernier Combat* . . . which I've mentioned here before (for me, it's 1983's *Diva*) and which I'd write more about if Luc would just keep his promise and send me some stills. Elizabeth Watt won Best Actress for the America's *Alone in the Dark*, and the Best Actor trophy was shared by Pete Walker's *House of the Long Shadows* line-up: Carradine, Cushing, Lee and Price. The film also gave the scripting prize to Michael Armstrong. Best camerawork trophy went to West German's *Fire and Sword* and the effects award was taken by Australia's *Return of Captain Invincible* – Chris Lee's second entry.

Hollywood writer-director Tony Bill headed the jury and visitors included Dario Argento, Luc Besson and *Xtro's* Harry Bromley Davenport, who now has a date, like me, with the first Brussels fantasy fest. ■

Something I Said . . .?

I may write this column in (or usually on the way back to) France. I never realised it was read here. Or not by bankers . . . But since my **Starburst 62** story naming the Dutch bank which proved to be the main funder of all those monstrous epic budgets of the Salkinds, Dino De Relentless and the Cannon Group, guess what? The French have bought the bank!

No kidding! The Credit Lyonnais bank which (unknown to me) rescued the Amsterdam bank from trouble during a bunch of scandal headlines earlier last year, has now increased its holdings to a controlling 90%. Hence, Dino's friendly helper, N.V. Slavenberg Bank, is now called Credit Lyonnais Nederland. I wouldn't mind but it's not even *my* French bank behind this coup – but my wife's. Still, nice to known someone in the family reads all this . . .

INVASION!

Jean-Marc and Randy Lofficier interview Kenneth Johnson, producer/writer/director of the new science fiction tv extravaganza "V".

When Ken Johnson, the guiding force behind "V" talks about his latest brainchild, there is an almost fanatical fervour in his voice.

Johnson, who gave us *The Six Million Dollar Man, The Bionic Woman* and *The Incredible Hulk* is a fortyish, bearded man. We met him on the set of *"V"*, while he was supervising the last stages of shooting.

Starburst: *Could you give us a little about the background of "V"?*

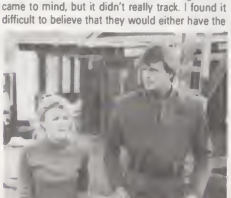
Kenneth Johnson: I've been a fan of Sinclair Lewis for some time, and one of his books that fascinated me the most, was a book that he wrote in 1935, called *It Can't Happen Here*. It was about what was happening in Germany and Italy in those years happening in the United States. A fascist regime taking power, America becoming a police state and how various people react to it. That had intrigued me immensely.

About a year ago, I set out trying to find a contemporary frame-work in which to tell that story. I feel that there is a great complacency in America, with our freedom, and I felt that it was an interesting statement that should be made, about where we are and how things could change very rapidly.

Also in the last years, I've watched various elements of fascism building in this country, the formation of vigilante groups and the like. I was anxious to make a statement about what it would be like if we actually ended up living in a police state. I also wanted to see how various individual Americans would react to an occupying army of fascists, the same way that the French reacted to the onslaught of the Nazis in the early 1940s.

But why aliens and all of this SF stuff?

Well, our problem in telling that story was, "Okay, where does this army come from?" The Soviets and the Chinese were obviously the first thoughts that came to mind, but it didn't really track. I found it difficult to believe that they would either have the numbers or the staying power, or the presence to be able to commandeer the country. In talking it over during a length of time with a friend and Brandon Tartikoff, who had been intrigued by the notion from the beginning, we hit on the idea that suppose the army doesn't come from here at all. Suppose the army comes from up there? Somewhere else, some other world?



At first I wasn't thrilled, because the things I've done in this town all smack of science fiction, and it's something that I've been looking to try and pull away from, just because you very quickly become typecast. But the more I thought about it, the more I thought that we could do a show that was not *Battlestar Galactica*, that was not *Buck Rogers*, but that set out and accomplished what I had originally laid out as my goal. Then, perhaps, it could work.

Did you approach the telling of "V" from a realistic standpoint?

Yes, very much so. I said myself, "Okay. What happens if . . ." What happens if we wake up one morning and there are space craft over all of the major cities in the world. The space craft are gigantic, three or four miles across. There are fifty of them, this is a serious arrival!

What if we wake up one morning and there they are? What if these people come and say, 'We come in peace. Please have the Secretary General of the United Nations meet us on the roof of the U.N. building at 01:00 Greenwich time tonight." The Secretary General appears, along with the press, and he goes aboard a little shuttle craft which comes down and lands on the roof of the U.N. Later, like Mr

Chamberlain, he comes out with a piece of paper in his hand and says, "I have here a message from Herr Hitler, who says everything is wonderful." I even cast a gentleman who looks like Mr Chamberlain.

What is the viewpoint in the story?

We see this whole event from the stand point that we would actually see it from, that is, over the television set. Marc Singer plays Mike Donovan, who is a television cameraman. He documents things and is one of the people that is aboard the roof of the U.N. building that night. It is through his camera that all the rest of the world sees what is going on.

All the families in this one small neighbourhood in Southern California becomes the microcosm of the story, see it in the same way. They all see it coming over the television set. Marc sees it first hand, being there in the midst of all the action, and I think this helps impart a tremendous realism to the picture. In addition to the fact that all the newsmen are real newsmen.

Howard K. Smith, the senior newsman from ABC news, is used extensively through this. Clete Roberts, a local California newsman is used. Which lends an air of authenticity to the piece which Orson Welles would be proud of!

So you see TV as a Greek Chorus that ties the whole piece together, and later, becomes a most devastating tool for propaganda. It is turned against us, and all of a sudden there is no more NBC, CBS or ABC.

Did you chose to make the aliens look human?

Definitely. They do look like us, even if they don't quite sound like us. Their voices are peculiar a little bit. How, I'm not quite sure yet, I haven't had time to work it out. Clearly different enough from us to be alien and clearly enough that if you're sitting around in casual conversation and one of them opens their mouth, you know he's not one of us. Rather like the Germans in France.

Why have they come to Earth?

The reason they are here is because they need our help. Their planet is in serious environmental difficulty and only the manufacture of certain chemicals and compounds will enable them to survive. They have come to Earth in order to ask us to use some of our planet's resources to help them manufacture these chemicals and compounds. In return for this they will give us all their technology, share with us all their knowledge, including things like cures for cancer.

When the first group of aliens lands I have a high school band to greet them. In my script I wrote in that they play a Sousa march. But my secretary Shannon said, "No. You know what they would be playing? They'd be playing *Star Wars*." I had a good laugh, then I realized she was right.

What is the key element in "V"?

The key element in the picture is . . . Certainly the most eye-catching things are big spaceships and things like the Visitors' pistol. The pistol is a modified luger. It has a Germanic quality to it, just like the helmets, uniforms, boots and hats. It's all very insidious.

The story, and the heart of the show, is the human element. The relationships of people and how they react. How would you react to an occupying army? Some of us say, "How can I get something out of this?" Some of us become opportunists and collaborators, like the Vichy French. Others of us say, "It will pass. This doesn't happen in America. It can't happen here. I don't have anything to worry about, I'm not Jewish." Then there is the group of people that say, "No. This is wrong. What's happening here is wrong and we're going to fight it!" And they become the resistance.

The story is a saga that involves all of these

Opposite top: *The Invaders arrive, clad in jackboots and sinister Germanic helmets.* Opposite below: *The stars of the two part show, Faye Grant as Juliet Parrish and Marc Singer as Mike Donovan.* Above: *A show of strength. The Invaders occupy Earth and introduce martial law.* Below: *An inside view of one of the alien shuttle craft hangars.*

people, much the way Tolstoy interwove the families in *War and Peace*. I'm endeavouring to try to do the same sort of thing in this drama, so that the science fiction aspects of it are very underplayed. As a matter of fact, after the grandiose entrance of the mother ships all over the world, the first time Marc takes his camera and goes on board to see what's happening, you don't even see first hand. You see the video play-back later on as he and Jenny Sullivan who plays the newswoman that eventually becomes Leni Reithenstal, watch it and run the tape on fast forward through the dull parts. And, as Howard K. Smith defines for us, it's a little disappointing on the Mother ship. It looks like the inside of a big aircraft carrier, it's no big deal. Because that's not what this picture is about . . .

What this picture is about is the people who change. It's about the family whose son becomes a member of the youth organization, because of his friends – sounds like the Hitler youth? It is. Also, how as time goes by, parents have to be careful about what they say in their house, because he's there and is involved with them. Certain members of his organization have told on their parents, and the parents have disappeared.

Now in every instance like this, there are scapegoats. In the 1930s and 40s in Germany and France, it was the Jews. In 1983 it is the scientists. The scientists of the world suddenly become the outcast people. In very carefully choreographed ways the Visitors turn world opinion against the body of the scientific community. Suddenly, to be a scientist is not healthy. Suddenly, to have lunch with a scientist is not something you want to do. Suddenly, to be a scientist's child means that people throw rocks at you. Worst of all, it can mean disappearing – to where? Night and fog. Just like the Jews did in France and Germany in World War II.

This is pretty frightening . . .

Yes, it is! That's what I want this picture to be, frightening. I want it to have the impact of all of us sitting home now, thinking, "What if this really happened?"

There are several elements of *The Private Life of the Master Race*, there are elements of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, there are elements of *Lacombe Lucien, The Sorrow and the Pity*, of *The Good and the Bad*, Lelouch's tale of incidents that happened, such as the absolute devastation of the French town where they made the mistake of killing the German commandant. The Germans rolled in and destroyed the town. They took 642 people, locked them in the church, burned the church, and shot anybody that tried to escape. Eleven people did. That happens in our story. All of a sudden, the little town of Monrovia, California isn't there any more. There's only one survivor. It's a key scene for Marc, because that's where his son and ex-wife live. They're gone. Where they're gone to, well we're not sure. We find out later in the picture.

It becomes one of the key drives for Marc's character to determine where these people have gone and why.

How long is "V" going to be?

It's a big story. In its US TV format, it's now a four-hour film, and it may yet go longer than that. We may end up running five hours. It's very expensive, and all the money is on the screen.

NEW DIRECTION FOR BOND

From Han Solo to James Bond – Irvin Kirshner talks . . !

"As far as I'm concerned, there never was a Bond picture before!"

***Starburst**: Following a success like* The Empire Strikes Back *a director can pick and choose. Why did you pick* Never Say Never Again?

Irvin Kersher: First of all, because I was asked! I was working on another film and we couldn't get the money for it and I was also working on *Man's Fate* and I could see that that would not be ready for a long time. So, I said I would be interested and that started a chain of events. I met up with Sean Connery who was an old friend of mine, (I had directed him in 1966 in *A Fine Madness*) and I had known Jack Schwartzman (the producer) for years and I became increasingly interested as we talked about the project. I saw the chance to do something that I had never done before and that this is always what excites me.

I find that the only way I really learn is by challenging myself with some kind of activity that I'm not completely familiar with. Although this film is primarily an entertainment, it is also a serious picture for me. It explores certain world problems. Every film must have something of significance. An artist always had attitudes and I'm finding out what my attitude is by working on something. If I sit in the woods, staring into space, I don't know who I am or what I am. You have to constantly redefine yourself. So this picture is a tremendous challenge to me.

Once you had accepted the film, how did you approach it?

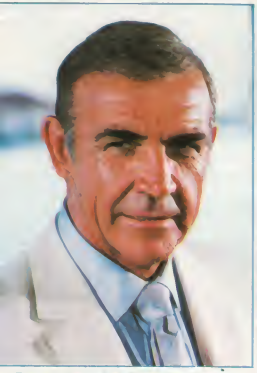
I went back and re-read Ian Fleming and from him I found the key to the tone and texture that I wanted for the film. Fleming was interested in the people. He has wonderful dialogue. Actually, he reminds me often of Dashiell Hammett which is saying a great deal for him. So in playing with the script, I began to get interested in the characters and how they related and how they revealed themselves, and hid, and lied, and how they revealed the truth about what was going on despite trying to hide it. I also looked at some of the old films – I had seen only some of them – and I realised which ones I liked and which were not up to par – and then I decided to forget that I had ever seen any of them.

So as far as I am concerned, there never was a Bond picture before. I'm not trying to copy anything. I'm trying to find a style for the story which will become the film. I think every film-maker does that. You try to find the style that's appropriate for the material.

Many of us think of Bond as almost superhuman. But was he superhuman in the books?

If you analyse the books, you realise that Bond was a bit cleverer than other people, his instincts were extraordinary and always brought him to the right place. He solved problems in a unique way. He would go to the centre of the action. Whereas, the others would be solving it by getting clues or using computers, he did it on a human level. And if there was a woman, he would find her because that was the way to finding the vulnerability of the man.

But more than being superhuman, he is wish-fulfillment for us. He does what we would love to be able to do. He has tremendous courage and I think that's one of the things that made the image a truly legendary one. He always displayed the courage we would all love to have. He picks up a beautiful woman and has her if he wants her. He fights against terrible odds. When we see him do that, we think to ourselves, "Wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to pull out a gun and shoot our enemies." To wipe away evil with one bullet is a fantasy. It's not a dangerous fantasy provided it remains a fantasy. It's



Top left: *A portrait of director Irvin Kershner.* Top centre. *The climactic battle scene of* Never Say Never Again. Top right: *Kim Basinger as Domino.* Left: *Sean Connery makes a spectacular leap (no stunt doubles here!).* Above: *A portrait of Connery as James Bond.* Above right: *Barbara Carrera plays Fatima, one of Bond's most arresting movie foes.* Right: *Bond and Domino cut a rug at Largo's grand charity ball.*

much more dangerous to watch the real killing day after day on the television news.

If it's fantasy, is this film closer to cartoon than reality?

I don't know what reality is! Every moment has a different reality for different people. We all look at the same thing but we don't all see the same thing. Dramatically speaking, reality for me means that the characters operate from a psychological base that's real. Chekhov once gave some advice to Gorky who had written to ask him about a plot he was working on. Chekhov's reply was: "You can invent anything and everything but not psychology." And that's what I find interesting in terms of transposing the book to film. That there is a certain psychological rightness to the characters as Fleming saw them. He understood people very well. He was a very prejudiced man and a very hard man but he was an observer of life and that's what makes a good writer. I'm trying to maintain that quality in the film.

I want the people to be true. In many adventure films, the characters are just there to serve the needs of the story, they are just pawns. But if they are properly motivated, if they feel things and operate according to the principles of love and hate, jealousy and fear, then we believe that what they are doing comes out of the interior life of that character. It's true to say that the situations often get very close to cartoons, but the characters are not cartoons.

In the case of Bond, for instance, if he gets thrown out of a window two storeys up, breaks through the glass, bounces off a car, and picks himself up and walks away with only a slight hurt, well, he can do that. And you can get away with that because what you see you tend to believe, if you make it believable. But when the characterisation is false, then you stop believing even in the cartoon quality. That's the biggest job in this film. I've got plenty of action, I've got plenty of humour. I've got good actors. I've got to make them come alive.

How contemporary is the story?

I think it's very contemporary. It deals with something that may unfortunately be happening in our lifetime and that is the problem of terrorists getting hold of nuclear weapons and of black-mailing governments. It's a very dangerous situation and I don't think that America or even Russia has done very much to help it.

Is it effortless directing someone as talented and professional as Sean Connery is?

Opposite top: *The principle stars of* Never Say Never Again *aboard the American submarine, Bernie Casey as Felix Leiter, Sean Connery as Bond and Kim Basinger as Domino.* Opposite left: *Felix Leiter struggles with one of Largo's henchmen in the final battle of the movie.* Opposite right: *Bond runs into shark trouble, courtesy of Fetime.* Opposite below: *To the Bond-cycle! 007 leaps clear over the baddies' car and once again escapes the evil designs of Fetima.* Left: *A portrait of the stars of* Never Say Never Again. *Sean Connery, Klaus Maria Brandauer, Max Von Sydow, Barbara Carrera, Kim Bassinger, Bernie Casey.* Below: *Irvin Kershner directs Sean Connery in the "Largo's Charity Ball" scene.*

Directing is never effortless but I find that all the best actors are easy to work with. When I worked with him on *A Fine Madness*, I knew then that he was a wonderful actor. He's not a typical actor. He finds the truth of every scene. He's also a very creative man and likes to be involved and I enjoy working with creative people. A really good actor will challenge the director and the director has to know what he wants. Every once is a while, Sean challenges me and I've got to come up with the answers. And every once in a while, I challenge him and he has to come up with the answers. That really makes for the fun of directing.

What about the physical side of it? There's a lot of action in the film

Yes and Sean does a lot of action. He went 45 feet underwater in the Bahamas and we did a scene in the hull of a ship that we had sunk. He rode a horse ferociously through a fort that we had in the South of France. As far as fighting goes, his timing is absolutely perfect. Not only for fighting but for film-fighting because he has a wonderful sense of rhythm. He can dance and does a wonderful tango in the film. He's everybody's man.

Is your James Bond older and wiser?

. . .than what? As far as I am concerned, this *is* James Bond. I think he *is* very wise and very cunning. Of course, he's not twenty-five. He's a bit older. So he does have more wisdom than a younger man. He knows when to back off because he does value survival. I look at it this way. I, too, am not a young man. I play a lot of tennis but nowadays, instead of playing five sets, I only play three. But I play those three sets *much* better than I ever used to play five because I'm considerably wiser now than I used to be.

What about the rest of the cast? You have some wonderful actors.

Yes I do. Of course I'm very excited by having Klaus Maria Brandauer as Largo. He is the best villain I have ever had because his villain is very very complex and if you have a powerful protagonist like Sean Connery you need almost as powerful a man to play the antagonist. There has to be real tension. Barbara Carrera, whom I've wanted to work with for some time, is absolutely magnificent and I'm very excited by Kim Basinger who I think is wonderful. I've got some fine performers from the British stage – people like Edward Fox, Alec McCowen – and it all adds up to a performance level which will be as important as the action.

You have spent a great deal of your career making "intimate" films and now, with The Empire Strikes Back *and this one, you are making blockbusters. Which do you enjoy more?*

I don't make blockbusters. The picture is the size that it takes. To me, this is not a big film. It's a film which has a story that has to be told and in telling the story there are some scenes that are very big and some scenes which are very intimate. For me it's an intimate film. I don't think in terms of wanting to make blockbusters, yet I think this is a big film. It has become a big film because there's so much story and so many things to show. But I am not deliberately trying to make a "big" film. I still enjoy making small, intimate pictures. Certain elements that are important to me are the same in any film: the people and the human values.

What is your overall aim?

To make it fun. That's the most important thing. To make it *not-boring*. . .! To make it an entertainment in the pure Graham Greene sense. And to express a contemporary vision of the world. I'm hoping that the film has entertainment, romance and action and that the story unifies it into an attractive whole.

Starburst FANTASY AWARDS

Once again *Starburst* gives you the opportunity to vote for you favourite film, TV show, Director, etc., in the prestigious *Starburst Fantasy Awards* for 1983. You should all know how the poll works by now; for a film to be eligible it must have been released between 1st January and 31st December 1983. The same applies to TV shows, only those first screened between the above dates can be included, so no voting for the repeats of *The Avengers* or *The Prisoner*, or *The Twilight Zone*, no matter how much you enjoyed these old shows compared to the current offerings on the tube. For individuals to be eligible (actors, technicians and so on) they must have had a fantasy film/TV show on release in Britain during 1983.

On the film front 1983 was, without a doubt, the year of the Ewok with *Return of the Jedi*. Two other so-called blockbusters were *Superman III* and *Octopussy*, but don't forget worthy films on release such as *The Evil Dead*, *Tenebrae*, *The Hunger* and *Psycho II*. Other gems (and turkeys) included *The Twilight Zone*, *Blue Thunder*, *WarGames*, *Dark Crystal*, *Xtro*, *House of the Long Shadows*, *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, *Cujo* and *Brainstorm*. As well as the continuing sagas of Star Wars, Superman and James Bond, other sequels included *Halloween III: Season of the Witch*, *Friday the 13th Part 3* and *Jaws 3D*. The last two employing the extra-dimension gimmick, which saw a revival last year, other contenders being *Treasure of the Four Crowns* and *Spacehunter*.

There wasn't much new on TV, although 1983 did see a return for Gerry Anderson to the world of puppets with *Terrahawks*, and there was of course another season of *Doctor Who*. We have again retained the TV categories from previous years, along with the Best Fantasy Book, so please don't ignore them. Thank you.

For your votes to count you must fill in your name and address and include this with your ballot. If you don't want to cut up your issue of *Starburst* a copy of the voting form will suffice. Send your ballots to: *Starburst Fantasy Awards*, Marvel Comics Ltd. 23 Redan Place, Queensway, London W2 4SA.

All ballots must be post-marked no later than: 15th March 1984.

Film Awards

Best Film.....

Best Actor.....

Best Actress.....

Best Director.....

Best Script.....

Best Special Effects.....

Worst Film.....

TV Awards

Best TV Show.....

Best Actor.....

Best Actress.....

Best Director.....

Best Script.....

Best Special Effects.....

Worst TV Show.....

Others

Best Fantasy Book.....

Outstanding Achievement by an Individual.....

'...excellent service...'

The best video in Town

He's greatest challenge...

SPIDER-MAN STRIKES BACK

Columbia Pictures

£45.95

PRECISION VIDEO PRESENTS

GERRY ANDERSON & CHRISTOPHER BURR'S

TERRAHAWKS 2

THE MENACE FROM MARS

A 92 MINUTE VIDEO SPECTACULAR

U

VHS VABPV 2631

Betamax BABPV 2631

AND DON'T FORGET THE FIRST TERRAHAWKS VIDEO

FOR FREE CATALOGUE CUT OUT & SEND TO VERY P.V. PRECISION VIDEOS LTD. ACT HOUSE, 17 CARLEY CAMPERLAND PLACE, LONDON NW9 5BG

VHS VABPV 2630 Betamax BABPV 2630 CRABPV 2630

NAME

ADDRESS

P.V.

Rental Only

James Bond's all time high!

NOW ON VIDEO

ROGER MOORE as IAN FLEMING'S JAMES BOND 007 in OCTOPUSSY

PG

WARNER HOME VIDEO

THIS IS JUST WHAT ONE OF OUR HUNDREDS OF SATISFIED CUSTOMERS HAD TO SAY ABOUT US — Hope to hear from you soon!

EXCITING VIDEOS AVAILABLE DIRECT TO YOU BY MAIL ORDER

RENTAL MAIL ORDER SERVICE

ROGER MOORE in JAMES BOND 007 OCTOPUSSY

YOURS FOR ONLY £4.95 per week (+ deposit)

★ VIDEO HOTLINE ★

LATEST NEWS & RELEASES (0245) 358291

THE VIDEO SCREEN

5A RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD, ESSEX

SEND A LARGE SAE FOR OUR LATEST CATALOGUE & LISTINGS OF SALE ITEMS!

PLUS NEW TITLES AVAILABLE EVERY WEEK

All films available in VHS & BETA (some V 2000 — we're losing wars)! Videos are for British Standard PAL SECAM – so Foreign customers check your system before ordering.

THE FIRST & BEST HORROR/S.F. VIDEO MAIL ORDER SPECIALISTS!

Shooting on the Streets

Tony Crawley reports on the filming of Walter Hill's Streets of Fire

"The first part of the scene I want to do is McCoy smokin' here. A nice big one. Let her eyes direct you . . . She looks down there. Take us to a POV (point of view). Then, we cut in here to the dialogue. The camera should sorta fall back. And Diane says: 'What's happening? I don't understand.' And Cody goes: Whack! Knocks her out. A little colloquy there. Then, he'll step out of the train and move off. Into the night."

Walter Hill is directing a movie. Scenes 251–254. On a four-car elevated subway train in Chicago. His hero is wondering if anyone knows how the heroine takes a punch.

It's Hill's seventh picture. The fifth with producer Lawrence Gordon. After *Hard Times (aka, The Street Fighter)*, *The Driver*, *The Warriors* and Hill's biggest smash, *48 Hrs.* His third with Gordon's partner – the Indy Jones lookalike (fedora *and* glasses) called Joel Silver.

This one's called *Streets of Fire*. Not to be muddled with the *48 Hrs* star Nolte's newie, *Under Fire*, although most everyone in it is, if you get my drift. *Streets* has a cast of young faces on the rise. No big names. "The important thing is casting well," says Hill.

Michael Paré, upcoming as Eddie in *Eddie and The Cruisers*, is the latest Hill hero. Tom Cody. Soldier of fortune. *Mad Max* with an American accent. The rest of the cast – some 400 of them – seem to have been swept in from Hill's *The Warriors*. They control different districts, each with its own look, mood and temper. The Richmond is all muted greys, greens, violets. It's tougher reds, golds, blacks in The Battery. Argyle prints and plaids, if you please, in The Parkside. As for The Strip, they have neon colours. Naturally.

So, what exactly is going down here? Is this a *Max* film – or another gang movie? A bit of both, really. In bone-crushing collision. But, okay, is it sf or straight? More bone-crunching there, too, I'd say.

"The setting is a mythical city of the future where things have . . . broken down a bit," says Larry Gross. He should know. Larry wrote the thriller with Hill. It's their second film, by the way. The first was *48 Hrs*. That's why they've got so much Universal money for this one.

"One of the things about the future," adds Gross, more engrossed in the past (a Dickens book) than the Chi' location shooting, "is that maybe it's not gonna be as technological as we used to think. Maybe it'll be . . . a little crummy in places."

Maybe is right. Production painter Jay Hinkle spent the last few hours crummying up this elevated train. More grime than crime for Andrew Laszlo's camera just now. It's *his* third Hill film, after *The Warriors* and *Southern Comfort*. Walter Hill likes working with the same guys.

There is not, though, Ridley Scott's over-attention to (in the end, largely unseen) detail here. Enough is enough. Most of the street stuff, of which as before with Hill there's plenty, with those 400 actors, heaps of motorcycles, crummy elevated trains and a '51 Mercury suitably chopped, channelled, nosed, decked, reamed, steamed, everything but dry-cleaned.

It's a darker movie than usual. Night shooting by day, see. No day-for-night filters, though. Walter Hill had a better idea. He had the street "tarped-in", as he puts it. A huge tarpaulin affair on 250 poles, 80ft in height, covers the set, hiding it from the morning and noon-day Californian sun. And smog. It's like filming under a big top. (John Boorman has been up to much the same, inside huge plastic bubble affairs, for his *Dream One* production in Paris. He had the sky painted on the inside of his. Very clever).

Hill says he had the idea for the movie some years back. It came back when putting Nick Nolte and Eddie Murphy through their paces in *48 Hrs*. Larry Gordon liked it, so Walter and Larry Gross started writing it last autumn, as his first real hit went through the collective roof. He handed it into the Universal chieftain, Bob Rehme, at noon, on a January Friday. Sunday, Rehme called everyone up with an AOK and go, men, go. By April 4, shooting was underway in Chicago.

Fifteen weeks after that, everything was in the can. Very smooth, is Walter Hill. (In the interim, costumier Marilyn Vance worked on the special clothes with Giorgio Armani, he who bedecked Richard Gere with his finery for *American Gigolo*. Armani works out of Milan. That's where some of the budget figure went. Shipping more than 200 costumes from Milano to L.A.

Streets of Fire, says Hill, is a rock 'n' roll action fantasy. Simple as that. His macho man hero, is back in his old warring and stomping ground to rescue a former girlfriend. She's rock singer Diane Lane. All filled out since her debut at 14 in *A Little Romance*, and doing real well in Coppola's *The Outsiders* and *Rumble Fish*. Her new rocker name? Ellen Aim. Rock Moranis, one of the new "in" comic finds in America from the *SCTV* series and the *Strange Brew* movie, is her manager, Billy Fish.

Willem Dafoe is Raven, leader of the Bombers. He's the one who's snatched the songthrush after a rock concert. Hot-shot Cody gets her back, of course – that's why they're on this Chicago train. Raven doesn't leave things there. He starts an all-out war to get her back, by stopping – stomping – Cody's group on the trip back from enemy turf to the Richmond (See what I mean about *The Warriors*?)

The hero's sidekick was written as a macho Mexican. He wanted to team up with Cody to help beat his drink problem. Amy Madigan, who lately finished *My Love Letters* with Jamie Lee Curtis, is the real McCoy, instead.

"Amy came in to read for Cody's sister," explains Hill's assistant Mae Woods. "She said, 'It's really a nice script but the wonderful character is the sidekick. It's such a great role, it should be a woman.' Walter thought about that and he liked the idea."

He would. He re-wrote two of the Nostromo's crew in *Alien* as women, when he and David Giler moved in on Dan O'Bannon's script. That switcharound gave us Sigourney Weaver. Now he's offering Amy Madigan. Nice.

"I play a lovely woman," she says. "She smokes cigars and handles machine guns. She does a couple of other things, too."

"Now," adds Mae Woods, "Cody and his sidekick are two people working together. They aren't competing. They just need each other to get the job done." And Deborah Van Valkenburgh is Cody's sister, Reva, instead. She has to feel like she's been here before. Deborah was the female lead in *The Warriors*.

"Walter really likes dealing with thematic archetypes," continues Mae Woods. "And you can't make Westerns anymore." Well, he tried with *The Long Riders* (1980), of course. Good film. Bad box-office. (Will John Carpenter beat the hoss-opera jinx with *El Diablo*?) Hill makes urban ghetto Westerns instead. After all, what is Michael Paré's unshaven Cody (Buffalo Bill's real name) but the very basis of *Mad Max* and Jeff Byron's *Metalstorm* role – Clint's Man With No Name. Right? Right.

Not all the *Streets of Fire* rock is to be thrown at people or died upon. Record man Jimmy Lovine, producer of Stevie Nicks, Dire Straits, *et al*, is producing the musical rock. Diane Lane's singer gal has a couple of numbers with her group, The Attackers. The rockabilly L.A. group, The Blasters, play in the Bomber's hang-out and The Sorels is a four-man doo-wop ensemble created for the film.

But ssh, Walter Hill is directing a movie.

"Lemme see you with a little smile when she brings up the girl in your past," he says, rehearsing Paré and Lane, four, eight, *eleven* times over. "These are the little touches. Make it flow . . . Start out by not relating with your eyes. You're trying to avoid her because you know what you've got to do." (Clock her one, he means).

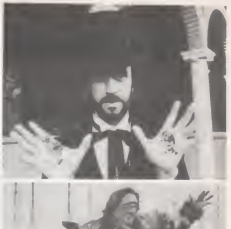
"Let them see her pull you in. She's kinda remembering the good old days. It is pleasant. They *were* good old days. The first time you look toward her, stay on her. Then, let the slowing down of the train pull you back into what it is you have to do. Right, that's it . . .

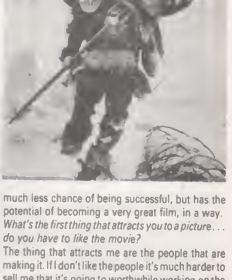
"And . . . ak-shun." ■

Opposite: *Diane Lane to Michael Pare: "If you and I don't have anything to talk about, why'd you come and get me?" A scene from Walter Hill's* Streets of Fire *(1984).* Right: *Michael Pare, star of* Streets of Fire. *Below: Amy Madigan swings, Bill Paxton collapses. Two fisted adventure from Walter Hill.*

SCORING BRAINSTORM

Starburst talks to film composer James Horner





The eagle-eyed among you will have noticed a new name creeping into credits for several recent fantasy films – James Horner. James was born in 1953 in Los Angeles but attended Holland Park School in London and went on to study at the Royal College of Music before returning to L.A. where he continued his studies at U.S.C. winning a master's degree in composition.

Following this, he taught music at UCLA and while there, achieved a PhD in composition and music theory. Like so many bright young people of his age, he was signed up by the indefatigable talent spotter, Roger Corman, for whom he scored five films. Horner was recently in London where he was composing the score for the film version of the successful West End play, *The Dresser*, with Tom Courtney. While in London, Horner also found time to re-record his music from *Brainstorm*, the new Douglas Trumbull special effects extravaganza, for That's Entertainment Records. In between conducting takes for the album with the 55 piece London Symphony Orchestra at the Abbey Road Studios, James Horner found time to talk to **Starburst**'s Phil Edwards.

Starburst: *You're very young for someone with such a substantial list of credits. How did you get started?*

James Horner: I got started in Los Angeles, by doing films for the American Film Institute and very low budget features. I made a decision when I was first starting out – I come from the classical world – that it was better to do "B" movies, low quality films, theatrical films than it was to do episodic television. A lot of people were working in television and making a lot of money and they stayed, they never broke out. When I started working in low budget films and for the AFI I was meeting a lot of directors who were young then. They were all eventually to rise out of low budget films themselves. So I was meeting people and making investments with directors and producers who later went on to become much more well-known.

Can you give me some names?

Jon Davidson and Hunt Lowery who made *Airplane*, Joe Dante who's doing *Gremlins* and did one of the episodes of *Twilight Zone*, Alan Arkush who really hasn't caught on yet . . . those kind of people. Lewis Teague, who directed *The Lady in Red*. . . he's just done *Cujo*. I was asked to score that but I didn't want to. I've made a concerted effort to get out of horror pictures.

But you've done a lot of fantasy films. . .

I have, mainly, I guess, because I came out of the Roger Corman pictures. And coming out of that, the films I was being offered were ones that were just larger and more expensive versions of those kind of films. They were "A" pictures instead of "B" pictures, but they were still dealing with space stuff or with things that go bump in the night. I was able, slowly, to transcend that and now I'm not doing those kind of films. When I'm asked to do a film like *Star Trek 2*, or *Star Trek 3*, if that should happen – that's a different sort of thing. It's an important enough film. A film like *Brainstorm* is a special effects film . . . it was a chance for me to work with Douglas Trumbull, who I greatly admire and we've become terrific friends.

When were you brought into Brainstorm*?*

Douglas apparently saw *Wolfen* which I'd done and loved the score . . . the whole sound presentation. He initially approached me when it was coming out and he screened it for me. I liked it and we got very well. Then Natalie Wood died. The film was put in postponement for a year, or whatever happened . . . legal things, I won't get into that. So it was a whole year later that he came back to me and said he had a "go" on finishing the special effects and asked if I was available.

And that was the first time you worked on the film? You hadn't written any themes for it at that stage?

No. I was working on *48 Hours* at the time and hadn't thought about it. I'd seen the film but hadn't thought about it. I don't think about it till I'm actually engaged and everything else is out of the way, otherwise it just confuses everything. So I agreed to do it. As a matter of fact I was asked to do *WarGames* as well and I went through a very difficult decision. I really felt strongly that *WarGames* may be a very successful film, a surefire successful film. But I wasn't available because I really wanted to do *Brainstorm*, a much more interesting film which has much less chance of being successful, but has the potential of becoming a very great film, in a way.

What's the first thing that attracts you to a picture. . . do you have to like the movie?

The thing that attracts me are the people that are making it. If I don't like the people it's much harder to sell me that it's going to worthwhile working on the film. Now, if it's a terrific film and I don't like the people making it, I can deal with that. But there are very few terrific films being made. Most films are middle of the road and you hope that by the time music and sound effects are added it'll be terrific. But when you look at it you say, "That doesn't particularly do anything for me," or you may say, "It's not bad." It really sometimes takes the director or the producer to be really wonderful, and there are very few of those.

How did you work with Trumbull on Brainstorm*?*

We ran what was completed, all the live action stuff. The special effects weren't shot then. I was engaged as the special effects were just starting to wind up and he was turning them out. So as I was writing I got to the end of the sequences where they were live action things that I could score. Now I was faced with the situation where I had to score special effects sequences. I'd call Doug up and tell him I'd need timings – composers work to specific timings. And he'd said, "I don't have them, I don't have the shots I've done yet." So all the special effects shot in the film, he'd explain to me over the phone . . . telling me a story. I'd make mental notes. He'd say something like, "After three and a half seconds there's big violet flash, and then this happens and then that happens . . ." The whole thing was done abstractly. Just him talking to me and me jotting down notes to his descriptions and then writing the music to those very approximate timings, and what I perceived he was going to make.

This working method would make for what I would think would be very abstract score . . .

It does. It worked terrifically because it gets to the basis of what it's all about. It was terrific to work that way, to work with him in such an abstract way. He's the most abstract man I've ever met. I love to work without precise timings . . . when it's as nebulous and atmospheric as it can get. Because that's when

you have the most chance to be creative. So we got to the rehearsal sessions and I'd run through the pieces and he'd come out of the booth smiling! He knew what each piece was meant for. He'd say, "That's great! You'll love it when you see it." He'd keep saying that to me. Then he brought a colour print in, and it really did work very well . . . and I'd never seen the completed picture before that.

You've worked with Walter Hill on 48 Hours *and you're also doing* Streets of Fire, *which is a kind of science fiction film . . .*

Streets of Fire is set sometime in the future/past . . . it's in the future but you don't know quite when. There's a lot of 50s stuff in it, as well as punk and new wave. It's a rather violent film, needless to say with Walter. It's also a rather timeless film, but it's not *really* a sci-fi movie.

How do you compare working with Walter Hill and say, Doug Trumbull?

Well, Walter makes different types of films. His films always move at the speed of light. They're more violent, less abstract and more hard-edged and they demand a certain approach. Walter also has certain tastes in orchestras, that Doug doesn't have. Doug is much more of a romantic. Most film makers I deal with are very different to one another. Probably the greatest disparities I've encountered in the people that I've worked with are with Walter Hill and Doug Trumbull.

You've said that the way you worked with Trumbull is an odd example of a working relationship . . . how do you normally work with a director . . . what's the nuts and bolts of it?

What happens most of the time is this: I'm hired and I see the film twice or three times by myself . . .

And this is minus any sort of music at all?

No, sometimes they have put "temporary music" in. The first thing I do then is find out how long that music has been with the film. If its been in for a while, chances are, in their minds they've become "married" to it and they are going to have a hell of a time when they see it with *my* score. I have to convince them that it's better with my music than the "temp" music. Most films, when I get involved, are not quite at the moment where they've put in temporary music. They are just being fine cut. So I'll see it twice and I give them my ideas. After about a week we have a "spotting session". There's me, a music editor, the producer, the director and maybe the editor. They tell me what they're looking for in the music, what they want the music to do. And then we go throught the movie reel by reel, scene by scene, stopping and starting. The producer will say "I'd like music there," the director will say, "No, I don't want it there . . . I think it should start there, not here," and so on. I might suggest it doesn't *need* music there, at that particular point. They are those kind of sessions.

So it's a collaborative process?

Yes it is, totally. By that time, they trust you, hopefully . . . that your decisions are sound and you have to do some convincing because if you say it doesn't need *any* music, they're very nervous. They've been living with their film for a year, and I've just come in. The music editor then takes all the notes (of these sessions), puts the film on a moviola and actually times, to the hundredth of a second, those sequences – with all the things that happen, like dialogue, ends of lines, door slams, crashes, gunshots. So I have a running list of everything, in timings. So when I come to write the score I can choose what to catch with the music or ignore. For example: I can't have all the brass blaring *there*, because a character is whispering . . . that sort of thing. That's the timing process.

And then what?

I start writing. I usually have about five weeks to write it. During that time I'll constantly call the director, more than the producer, although that depends on their chemistry, and say, I've tried something here, and he'll come over and listen to it. So I work very closely with the director. I never just go off for six weeks to write and then come back and do a scoring session.

Do you ever get a brief where the film makers think that a particular scene needs something, needs helping, through the music?

Yes, and sometimes we all agree and others I'll suggest it's not as bad as they think it is. Sometimes they ask to put in the music cue anyway to see how it ►

Opposite page: *Cliff Robertson and Natalie Wood in a scene from* Brainstorm. *Jonathan Pryce as Mr Dark in* Something Wicked This Way Comes, *and the Cyclops from* Krull. Top left: *A scene from* Battle Beyond the Stars. Left: *The mutant creature from* Monster. Top: *Pam Grier as the Dust Witch in* Something Wicked This Way Comes. Above: *Ken Marshall and Lysette Anthony in* Krull.

works, as they can always take it out after. I usually don't want to write music that's not going to be used, so why spend the money and the effort, etc. . . let's decide *now*. Sometimes it takes two days to "spot" a film. Occasionally in the writing of the music I'll expand cues or change where they start. . . I do a lot of changing. The spotting session with the director and the producer usually gets us 75 to 80% of where it's all going to end up. The fine tuning, the 20% I do when I'm writing, in the compositional process.

What's your working time frame. How long did Krull *take for example?*

On *Krull* I had five and a half weeks to write seventy-five minutes of music and then another ten days to come up with another thirty-five minutes of music.

Was that an exceptional example of speed, that's a lot of music to compose?

Yes. I can't work that fast, it's just *too* fast. The copyists couldn't keep up. I really was working twenty-four hours a day, I was getting sick. I was using three orchestrators to try and keep up with me, because I couldn't possibly orchestrate it all in that time. It was too much to try and accomplish, but we did it.

What about other films . . .

Wolfen, for instance, I had twelve days. But for some reason *Wolfen* went very fast. There was about forty-five minutes of music and it was a sound world that I was familiar with. Something like *Krull* takes a lot more care. It's like building a model ship, it has to be just *so*. *Wolfen* is a lot more atmospheric, avant-garde score, so I'm not worried about certain things. I don't have to worry so much about how the horns lay with the violas and doubled with the piccolos and make sure that *that* sound is brilliant. It's not a concern in that, in *Wolfen*. Usually I have about four to five weeks to score between thirty and sixty minutes of music.

With Brainstorm, *you're re-recording the score for record, so it's not actually the soundtrack. How will that differ from what's heard in the film? A different orchestra for example . . .*

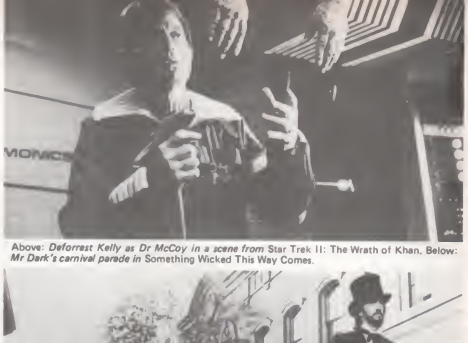
Not at all, just different orchestras. Slightly different tempos, because I'm not conducting to the picture now. With this it's more like a performance, so the pieces tend to go a little bit slower or a little faster.

48 Hours has a jazz orientation. Are you a jazz fan at all?

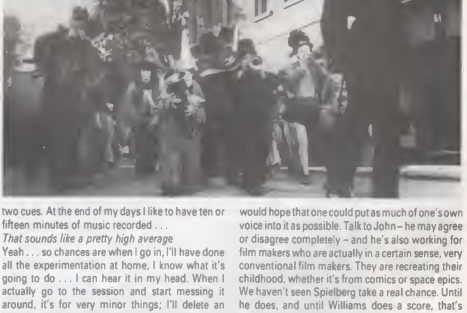
No. I'd never written a score like that. When the producer approached me he said he wanted a score that was really driving, urban, city streets score, as he called it. I told him I wasn't a rock'n'roller. He told me they wanted a weird fusion – driving, hard-edged. So I came up with the idea of using a lot of contemporary instruments, though no guitars, and using it with this kind of quasi-atonal sound. And it worked very, very well. Basically they wanted a fusion between Rock 'n' Roll and *Wolfen*, which is, I think, pretty much what I gave them – kind of square in the middle. On *Streets of Fire* I want to try something much, much bolder. I want to do something really unusual, although I'm not sure whether they'll let me do it.

Are you allowed much experimentation in film scoring?

Sure, I can do as much experimentation as I want. No one's going to know, except me. I go into a session and we experiment. The thing is, I have a very classical way of working. I go in with cues – I don't like changes and I don't like surprises. I like to know everything that's going to happen in a session. I don't like to waste time or spend money. A lot of people don't work like that. They'll go in and make changes and play around for a half a day, more changes and finally at the end of the day they'll have two cues. At the end of my days I like to have ten or fifteen minutes of music recorded . . .



Above: *Deforrest Kelly as Dr McCoy in a scene from* Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan. Below: *Mr Dark's carnival parade in* Something Wicked This Way Comes.



That sounds like a pretty high average

Yeah . . . so chances are when I go in, I'll have done all the experimentation at home, I know what it's going to do . . . I can hear it in my head. When I actually go to the session and start messing it around, it's for very minor things; I'll delete an instrument or something like that.

What film composers do you admire yourself?

When I was younger and starting out I admired many more people than I do now. It's like when you're a child you see adults as terrific, they're all grown up. But when you get older, you see the flaws. You see people of forty can be real idiots.

I *admire* people like Max Steiner, but I don't like that style of scoring . . . I'm a different generation. *Captain Blood* is a terrific score, or *King's Row* – for its time. People that I love now? I like Michael Small's music. I think he's a very sophisticated type of urban composer. I like some of the scores of Jerry Goldsmith, he's terrific. John Williams? . . . I loved *Jaws*, I thought it was a masterpiece, in terms of scoring and drama. *Star Wars* – I guess it did very well in the film. But as an interesting piece of music that I would listen to, and a composer that I admire away from the films . . . Some of the stuff that John got into before the large stuff . . he wrote a terrific score for *The Missourn Breaks*. . . a very interesting score . . . *Cinderella Liberty*, *Jane Eyre* . . . some really interesting scores. But none of the space epics do anything for me . . . recreations of Strauss . . . *Superman* doesn't do anything for me. But again, it's very snobby to say that, because they work terrifically well in the films and it's being in the film business that we all have to work towards. But one would hope that one could put as much of one's own voice into it as possible. Talk to John – he may agree or disagree completely – and he's also working for film makers who are actually in a certain sense, very conventional film makers. They are recreating their childhood, whether it's from comics or space epics. We haven't seen Spielberg take a real chance. Until he does, and until Williams does a score, that's really pretty on the fringe, I can't say whether he's really good enough. He's extremely successful, but I'm not a big fan of that kind of movie. It's very entertaining, but spiritually, it doesn't leave me with anything. So that's where I stand.

What sort of music do you listen to in your own home?

Actually, a lot of classical music, the impressionists' music of the early 20th Century, late German music of the 19th Century and Strauss, Berlioz. I listen to so many varied things. When I'm writing a score I never listen to music. I don't like to pollute . . . my ideas are very fragile and to listen to something else could steer you one way or another without you even being aware of it. ■

Selected credits

The Lady in Red, Humanoids from the Deep (UK title: Monster, Cerebrus/CST 0203), Battle Beyond the Stars (Rhino/RNSF 300), Wolfen, The Hand, Pursuit of D.B. Cooper, Deadly Blessing, Star Trek 2 – The Wrath of Khan (WEA/K 50905), 48 Hours, Krull (Southern Cross/SCR5 1004), Something Wicked This Way Comes, Brainstorm (That's Entertainment/TER 1074) Gorky Park, The Dresser, Streets of Fire, Testament.

BOMBS LAND ON BRITAIN

SPECIAL OFFER TO READERS OF MARVEL® COMICS

SAVE ONCE – ONLY £19.95

Four brand new alien video games for the ATARI 2600 from BOMB – Worth £24.95 each – have just penetrated Britain's atmosphere. And nothing you can do can stop them now. Not at these prices. Save £5.00 by ordering direct by post.

SAVE TWICE – SUPER JOYSTICK CONTROLLER FOR ONLY £6.95

An incredible offer to buyers of these super new video games – Purchase any one of the top titles shown and you can buy a super joystick controller, especially designed for the ATARI 2600, for only £6.95. That's a saving of £5.00 off the normal retail price of £11.95. Remember, this offer only applies when you buy a BOMB.

The battle heats up as squads of aliens move forward relentlessly. A game of speed, wits and dexterity

THE YEARS BEST BARGAIN.

■ Microgames members get free entry into a computerised games exchange list.

Do battle with the heat-seeking missiles as the confrontation progresses through six different landscapes.

■ ATARI 2600 and INTELLIVISION owners will be given release date information on the piggy back keyboards coming soon plus a special 15% discount – you'll be able to get it first at the lowest price.

Annihilate the hostile aliens as they fearlessly attack your laser bases.

But Hurry:

■ This offer can only be made whilst stocks last. Don't delay and be sure to get this great deal.

Escape the asteroids as they attack you with enormous efficiency from all sides.

FREE MEMBERSHIP TO THE MICROGAMES CLUB

Also with any BOMB order comes free membership of this great new club for games freaks who want to play more and pay less.

Just look at these benefits:–

■ The membership kit, complete with your personal Microgames Membership card, will be sent to you with a special discount list for Home Computers and Home Computer Software, including VIC, Commodore and ATARI 400/800.

■ Microgames members can save £££'s on all ATARI, INTELLIVISION, COLECO and VECTREX Games.

Send to BOMB Readers Offer, c/o Marvel Comics Ltd., 23 Redan Place, London W2 4SA.
I cannot refuse this special BOMB offer.
Please rush me the following BOMB games
☐ ASSAULT ☐ GREAT ESCAPE
☐ WALL-DEFENDER ☐ Z-TACK
(Please tick) at £19.95 each (incl. V.A.T. and P&P)
☐ (Please tick). 1 Super Joystick Controller at £6.95* (including V.A.T. and P&P).
☐ (Please tick). I wish to become a Free Member of the Microgames Club *
I enclose my cheque/postal order for a total of £_____ made payable to 'Bomb Readers Offer.'

Surname _____

Christian Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____ Postcode _____

Offer only open whilst stocks last

Allow 28 days delivery *Only available when ordering at least one game

BOMB

VI

DOUGLAS TRUMBU

Starburst: *A dozen years between your first and second movie. What happened . . .?*

Douglas Trumbull: Nothing but bad luck. Because I certainly wanted to direct a film after *Silent Running* (1972). But I had many, many big problems in Hollywood which drove me crazy. After *Silent Running*, I had a deal to direct a film called *Journey of the Oceanauts* which was a quite spectacular film, very much futuristic, a sort of *2001* underwater. Arthur Jacobs was the producer. He did all the *Planet of the Apes* films. He understood science fiction and we wanted to work together. We got very deep into this project, spent an enormous amount of time and energy on it, shooting tests, writing the script, doing drawings . . . and then Arthur Jacobs died. That property got all tied up in his Estate and it just never happened.

Then, I got into another big science fiction show. I was going to direct *Pyramid* at MGM – an end-of-the-world movie, again highly futuristic. We got very deep into that. I spent about a year and a half working on it, production design, script, location scouting and got all ready to go – and then MGM decided to get out of the movie business. Jim Aubrey closed the studio, sold out the lot and bought hotels in Las Vegas.

I thought; My God, how many times is this going to happen to me?

You soon found out, I gather.

I then had a picture at 20th Century-Fox, *Damnation Alley* (1977), which was really going to be an interesting movie. But just because of the management at Fox and the way the planning was going, I could see it was going to turn to total crap. I decided to get out of it. I just turned it over to them and they turned it into crap. [*Jack Smight directed the film*]

Those kinda things kept happening to me and I was just going broke! I spent about five years doing all that stuff. I finally realised, I've got to make a living. One thing, I knew I could get hired for special effects – or, at least, some kinda research. I set up a research and development company with Paramount – the Future General Company. That was in about 1975. That's where we developed ShowScan . . . as well as a number of other new forms of entertainment that haven't been done yet. One year into that, as soon as I developed ShowScan, the management at Paramount changed and Frank Yablans, who I developed it for, was fired and Michael Eisner and Barry Diller came in to manage Paramount.

Sounds a good time to split . . .?

They didn't want to let me go . . . I couldn't get out of my contract. I was *held* there! I was *kept* from working! Oh, I was paid. But I wasn't allowed to make a movie. Then, I got forced into service. Pictures to Columbia to do *Close Encounters* (1977).

You make it sound like Roots.

I decided that working was better than sitting on my hands, so I did that job – on an agreement with Paramount that they money we made off *Close Encounters* would be spent on further research, particularly on ShowScan. Well, I was lied to! That never happened. So when *Star Trek – The Motion Picture* (1979) came up and Paramount wanted me to do the effects, I said: Forget it! I refused to do it.

Then, they hired Bob Able and got into a *huge* amount of trouble. They got so deep into trouble – they had taken $30 million guarantees from the theatres and had to guarantee to deliver *Star Trek* on December 7, and it looked like they weren't going to make it. They were seven months away from delivery and they had . . . *nothing!* That's when I came in and said; Okay, I'll do *Star Trek* for you. But when I'm done, I walk away – a free man – out of my contract. And I'm gonna take *Brainstorm* and make it somewhere else . . . which I was developing in ShowScan and they didn't want to do that.

So, finally, I got free. I took *Brainstorm* to MGM. They said: Great, let's do it. So that's *finally* my second film.

An epic tale! How to survive in the Hollywood jungle

Introduction b

At times, poor Doug Trumbull appears to be one of the ruins that Cromwell *and* Hollywood knocked about a bit. He has one of the most bizarre records as a Hollywood director – two films in a dozen years. Between them, of course, he continued to make his quite legendary mark as, perhaps, the foremost special effects magician, certainly innovator, in all of Film City. While awaiting the opportunity to make a second movie, *any* second movie – and *Brainstorm* also joined the Trumbull club of shock-horror stories when MGM tried to drop the film after the tragic death of Natalie Wood just before the end of shooting – Trumbull has continued slaving away at a screen process he first told us all about in 1978. ShowScan (see *Starburst 7*). This has been rightfully hailed as the most revolutionary movie process to have come along since the introduction of sound.

To check up on Doug's long absence from the director's chair, and learn more of his ShowScan plans (he's now building films and theatres for the process), a young French special effects man, Pascal Pinteau, visited Trumbull in his E.E.G. HQ (Entertainments Effects Group) in glorious Marina Del Rey, near Venice Beach in Santa Monica, a short warp-drive out of Hollywood.

I've written about Pascal's SPFX work for French tv and movies in previous issues; and judging by his prodigious output, I'll have to do so again real soon. (He's into creating aliens now) Meanwhile, here's the other side of Pinteau – interviewing one of his main gods in movies. The other god, needless to say, is Ray Harryhausen.

"First," reports Pascal, "I had to see *Brainstorm*. That was no pain. I've been waiting, like the rest of us, for a new Trumbull movie. I was not dis-

Below: *The late Natalie Wood as Karen Brace in* Brainstorm. Right: *Douglas Trumbull directs Christopher Walken and Natalie Wood.* Far right: *Christopher Walken as Michael Brace.*

...L on BRAINSTORM

...y Tony Crawley

appointed. How any studio could even think of dumping this wonder-film is beyond me. It's ... well, it's magnificent. And on all levels, not simply his inevitably amazing effects. In the main, it's the story of researching an instrument that can store your every thought, experience, sensation, pain, pleasure, even your dreams and nightmares. Wear this Human Perception Recorder and you can share – possess – another person's existence. *Feel* everything they feel in life. And, indeed, in the film's most shattering sequence, in their death. Obviously, the U.S. military has its own uses for such a machine.

"Having an appointment with Douglas Trumbull is one heckuva kick when your own job is special effects. All of us in this business have deep respect for his work and his tremendous imagination. Simply visiting his E.E.G. facility was thrill enough for me. I watched his team at work. The mood at E.E.G. is of a family factory. Very busy, sure. But always time out for a laugh and a chat with visitors (and they come from all over).

"I'd caught Trumbull on a hectic day. His assistant, Allen Yamashito, said the boss was tied up with Japanese people interested in his ShowScan system – and he had an early dinner date that night. No matter. In his office, surrounded by stills of actors being considered for his future projects (all in ShowScan), Trumbull gave me as much time as he could. He was also kind enough to show interest in transparencies of my own effects work in Paris ... while I ogled the human Perception recorders hanging on his wall. For the cinema's foremost visionary, he's a modest man, unselfish and, as we say in France, *tres sympa* – just great.

"My only regret, we never had time enough to discuss *Blade Runner*. Another time, perhaps?"

So it's not that I didn't want to direct movies.

BRAINSTORM

Many congratulations on Brainstorm. It's brimful with positive energy.

Good. I think that's very important. I'm not French, of course, and so I don't know why the French like to see what I do.

It's not the French only ...

Well, I hope it's for more than just special effects. I maybe wrong, this could be the cliché or stereotype, but I feel that the French, most Europeans, are perhaps more sensitive about emotional content, nuances and *stories* ... not the superficial kind of films that you might get with a James Bond movie – which is just all for fun.

If there's any sensitivity in *Brainstorm* and if people really like it, it's because it's about determination and integrity, *not* about special effects. It's about relationships. It's about loving somebody. It's about commitment to what you believe in. They're all really important human values. And I don't think there's much awareness of human values in the States. Human values here is how much you spend on your car, how big your house is, what kind of fancy restaurant you go to. There's a terrible kind of consumerism and materialism here that's so ... terrible!

*And militarism? **Brainstorm** also deals with the ways the U.S. military machine steals inventions for their own nefarious uses. Are you greatly concerned with issues like that?*

It does not reflect on me, personally, because the military has never tried to steal from me. But, of course, in our research for *Brainstorm* talking to a lot of scientists, we did find out that it was true in this country. The military has a legal right to take any invention that goes through the U.S. Patent Office. There's a sort of intercept system for classifying any kind of invention appearing in this country that they think has some military value. And secondly, at least 50% and probably a lot more, of the research money spent in this country comes from the military. They're funding all the advanced research. So, yes, there's a very big connection between research and military interests. I don't really have an axe to grind about that but I wanted to show that's really the way it is.

*I'm surprised they're not after your research, too! As always you use it to do things in movies that have never been attempted before. **Brainstorm** explores the after-life. What inspired your particular visions of this?*

I can't say ... because I can't think of anything in particular. I thought here was a very challenging possibility because it wasn't a space, it wasn't stars, it wasn't models ... but a totally different kind of problem that was abstract and yet concrete at the same time.

Nothing to do with the various life-after-death books, for example?

Oh, I read all of those ... People reporting having seen bright lights and tunnels. I did all of that research. People coming into contact with people they hadn't seen for years – dead relations. People looking down upon themselves from above on operating tables when they're supposed to be dead and hearing what the doctors are saying ... there's a lot of that in the film, obviously.

But exactly how we did it was just ... art, I guess! In trying to come up with any new kind of system for anything, I always try to find something that's organised; that I can understand and the crew can understand. So, I came up with this idea of Memory Bubbles. You know, that each moment of time, or each of life's experiences is stored in some big, infinite computer in some awesome place.

Scientists say the memory does work that way, connecting one part of a memory – or a Memory Bubble! – to another.

Yeah and they're like a hologram that has memories evenly distributed throughout the whole brain in some lattice work that none of them understand yet.

It's fascinating!

Did you try other concepts?

We tried a lot of drawings and different ideas but this one seemed to be simple enough to understand and to visualise and not so abstract that it was just a . . . montage.

Or overly religious?

I tried to keep it quite technical in that respect. I'd come up with images that seemed to help open it up to interpretation. I mean, if you wanna say that's angels at the end, that's fine. If you wanna say they're . . . what? . . . *entities* . . . that's fine, too.

I saw them as souls.

Souls, birds, clouds, they could be anything.

Don't you know what they are?

Well . . . no! I just wanted it to be suggesting something that could have an awesome and beautiful quality to it and that you'd never seen anything quite like it before. It's hard to make something that's totally abstract but still seems to have some dimension to it . . . a time-frame . . . some kinda motion dynamics to it. Something that had life to it! I wanted to make you feel it was millions of souls all singing there . . . or just something . . . musical.

As well as your incomparable visuals, you also use the power of sound superbly. When Louise Fletcher is dying, we can almost feel the beating of her heart.

I was exploring this whole thing. The movie is really about media. With the changing format from mono-sound to stereo-sound, I was really trying to make you aware of the power of that medium. Really, the film should have been shot partially in ShowScan, which would have made that difference evens tronger. As it is, some people don't even notice that the screen size changes, or that the stereo-sound comes on and off. But it has a very powerful dramatic effect. What I'm saying is, I used the medium of shooting 35mm and 70mm for different parts of the film in order to use the very process, itself, as part of the drama . . . as a reporting technique. Few other films have done that before.

What other actual scientific facts did you make use of in the film?

We found that some of the people doing the most sophisticated brain research are using super-conductors, which have to be chilled with helium.

Or dry ice as in the movie . . .

We used liquid nitrogen on the movie. They used liquid helium in reality and try to chill these super-conductors down to a degree or two away from absolute zero, at which point the super-conductors become sensitive enough to detect what's going on magnetically and electrically inside the head.

We also took the idea of using a scanning laser-beam as a way of recording a huge amount of information in the smallest space, as is being used for digital and audio video technique. Lots of little bits and pieces like that were used in the film . . . cybernetics, artificial intelligence (computers capable of independent creative thinking), holography and advanced computer-imaging and various areas of medical investigation including neuro-psychology, neuro-chemistry and psycho-biology.

PERSONALS

Who are your own favourite directors, by the way?

Oh God, I don't think I have favourites – in anything. I think the person whom I admire more than anybody is Stanley Kubrick. He's one of the most interesting film directors going. I think Steven Spielberg is a fabulous film director. Martin Scorsese, too,

although his energy is sort of negative and . . . black. The sinister kind of films he makes don't interest me but as a director, he's incredible.

And if you were making a movie simply for yourself, what kind of film would that be?

Nothing abstract! Movies to me, if anything, are commercial entertainment that a lot of people must enjoy – or they're useless. I'm not interested in making movies for my own edification. It's great that everyone wants to see movies . . . and have a lot of fun. I have some ideas I'm working on. First of all, I want to make a very important film in the ShowScan process because it's the most *powerful* way to see a film.

BACKGROUND

Before we go forward, can we go back . . . to your real roots . . .

I'm sort of uneducated. I never really went to college. I went through about a year of junior college, here in Los Angeles, where I took a few art courses, preparing to be an architect. I found I didn't want to be an architect. I wanted to be an illustrator. So, I got very much into illustration, quit school and started working for advertising agencies and got some technical illustration jobs.

How did flat artwork lead to movies?

I got frustrated . . . that my illustrations didn't move around! I decided to try to get into animation. I got a job with a small studio – Graphic Films in Hollywood – doing technical animation for the U.S. Air Force and N.A.S.A. Space oriented animation.

What techniques were you into then?

Flat artwork. Cells. It was all *very exacting*, highly realistic air-brush illustrations. But there was some multi-plane work. For instance, cells at different levels on glass. Some of the animation cameramen would also be doing experimental work – multi-plane photography and interesting exposures. But no models . . . yet. Other people in the company were beginning to work on some models for a the few things they couldn't animate properly. Like they couldn't make the space station rotate with flat artwork, so there was a small model built of a space station. I sort of saw that all happening. But I didn't get into model photography or anything like that until . . .

2001

How did that once in a lifetime assignment come your way?

At that studio – Graphic Films – I ended up working on a special, ten-perforation, pull-down 70mm film for the New York World's Fair in 1964. A space film. Kubrick saw that. He was looking for people specialising in space affects and animation. We seemed to be some of the only people around doing that in the early '60s – '63, '64. So, Kubrick hired me and a couple of other guys to go to London to work on *2001*.

In September 1965 for close on three years, if I'm right . . .

2001 was really where I learned . . . *everything!* Because I was given the equipment, materials and manpower and time and money to . . . experiment. It was a fabulous opportunity for me, because I knew nothing about photography before *2001* except for 35mm single lens reflex photography.

My work on *2001* started out just being animation. The first big project was spending about six months making all those read-outs for H.A.L. Those little, 16mm rear-projected films were all animation. We

built our own animation camera, an interesting back-light rig, a 35mm camera with an Angenieux 10-to-1 zoom lens and diopter on it. It didn't move up and down it was just locked on to steel pipes. Then, I found a mechanical prototype kit, a kind of erector set or something, full of various rods and bars, screws and bolts and bearings and things. We ended up making all kinds of moving rigs from that – rigs that would move automatically with a shaft from the camera motor. That way, we could interlock the camera with the movements of the artwork and do multiple exposures. For example, multiple exposures of a movement with the camera shot at different focal lengths ... multiple passes. So I started getting involved with everything on *2001* and it moved very rapidly I grasped it quickly.

You grasped a heckuva a lot. Wasn't it on 2001 you started to make use of computers, too?

Yes, the things that we developed on *2001* ... / We kept getting into more and more complicated multiple exposures, trying to pull mattes off of shots and match the movements for rear-projection, for passes, things like that. We built quite a bit of machinery, under the supervision of Wally Veevers – who died recently. We used Selson motors as an interlock mechanism and a whole bunch of gearboxes off lathes, all set to different gear ratios, driven off a single motor. So, the camera was driven off a Selson and the track was driven off a Selson and the movement of the artwork as off a Selson. we were able to repeat exposures that way – mechanically. But you couldn't vary the speed or do a complicated move or anything like that.

I realised that it must be possible with the use of electronics and more numerically controlled techniques. It wasn't until after *2001* when I came back to Los Angeles, that I started asking a lot of electronic technicians and engineers if this was possible. They said, "Yeah, – it was in its infancy but there were pulse motors available, there were even hydraulic pulse motors. But numerically controlled machinery was pretty well done. We ended up building our own system. We bought some slow-synch pulse-motors and the pulse-motor driver electronics and fed that with square-wave pulses that were recorded on a regular stereo-tape recorder: one set of pulses for the motor and one for the camera. That way, we could actually change speeds during a shot. First time, I know of anyone using pulse-motors for an interlocked motion control move was on a "True" cigarette commercial back in 1968, I think.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

How did you get the notion to miniaturise the atmosphere to make your lighting even more realistic?

When I was working on *Close Encounters*, I was aware as an illustrator that aerial perspective was a very important part of realism in paintings. The old masters used aerial perspective all the time. Disney artists used it. And it's a beautiful photographic technique.

When you're working with a miniature, scaling something down to one-tenth scale, a flying saucer or a building or whatever it is, if something is moving you have to overcrank the camera and try and slow it down. I realised that if you could create an increased density of air, you could also make it look like it was a much larger space. You could take all the smog you can see for ten miles and put it into ... ten feet. We tried that out. The first tests were in a small aquarium. We built a little miniature inside it, lit it up from inside and filled the aquarium with cigarette smoke or something like that. And it was, obviously, very effective.

Spielberg did some tests on a stage at Burbank Studios, trying to smoke the whole stage for some miniature shots. It was impossible to control the smoke and impossible to undercrank – because all the changes in the smoke were accelerated. I decided it would be possible to control the density of smoke, by making a smoke air-conditioning system with proper fans and read the density of the smoke with some kind of a light beam across the room. So we built a room to do that in, with an old smoke machine, connected to the sensors in the room and as that machine showed that the air in the room was diminishing, we'd eject some more and set up a circle. And we were able to control the smoke very accurately.

STAR TREK – THE MOTION PICTURE

You changed, almost entirely, the space walk with Spock in Star Trek. How and why did you do that?

The space walk, as it was first photographed, was the most boring sequence I've ever seen! They had already done about a million dollars' worth of photography. Of actors hanging on wires moving through partial sets with a plan for matte-painting in the rest of the sets . . . and other optical effects. The movement was all very slow and the actors were just dangling. And they looked just like actors hanging on wires!

I couldn't imagine spending any money trying to put matte paintings into any shots that were already so . . . *terrible*. I felt that what the sequence needed was a lot of excitement. You were building the audience at this point of the film to where they were expecting something amazing to happen. I told them they should just abandon everything they'd shot, throw away those sets and forget this slow exploration of two actors talking to one another and just do it with Spock all by himself. Have him do something that was very risky, using that emergency jet-pack to blast himself into V'ger.

We had an incredibly short period of time to finish the film and I knew it was possible to do a series of straight-on camera moves. It would just take a track and a camera and an automatic focus move through a series of miniatures and artwork. Then, some kind of multi-plane stack-up would be the most straightforward kinda effect we could do. So we agreed to try that out, we were able to shoot a whole manner of different kind of photographic elements of this weird, abstract trip, to be opticaled one in front of the other, in front of the other . . . We actually got that sequence done in a very short time.

STAR TREK II

What happened on Trek II? There seemed to be all kinds of rows and rivalry between you and I.L.M. Was this because at least one whole sequence of yours from the first film was used among the I.L.M. effects?

I wasn't opposed to the re-use of those effects because I knew they planned to re-use them. The thing I was upset about was that my company bid on doing that film and we told Paramount that it had a tremendous financial advantage in doing *Star Trek II* with us, because we knew how to do it – economically. Apparently, they were eager to build up a relationship with George Lucas, because of *Raiders* and other things. So, Paramount actually ended up paying considerably *more* to have George Lucas' company doing the effects than if we had done them.

I just requested that if they used some of our footage that they give us a credit which they didn't do. Then, when there was a possibility of an Academy Award nomination, I thought we should be included. But that never came about either . . . so that doesn't really matter.

They didn't re-use your warp-drive effects, though.

They could use anything they wanted to.

So why didn't they use your warp-drive. It was more spectacular than I.L.M.'s.

I don't think they figured out *how* to re-use those effects. Because all of that photography was done in 70mm. When we did our bid on doing the job, we told Paramount that we had all our optical-printers and the 70mm equipment and we could re-use elements, recombine elements in new ways put the *Enterprise* against a different background, all those kind of things.

But when George Lucas' company started doing the effects, they kept calling us, asking us how to do things. For the first few phone calls, we helped out. We even sent some of our crew members up to I.L.M. To turn things on! They didn't even get the *Enterprise's* lights to work!

We finally helped a little bit but there came a point where I said, "No, we're not going to help you anymore at all. You guys have chosen to go to another contractor, so do what you want." I don't think they could figure out how to get those opticals together.

Next: Trumbull on ShowScan. "I've just given up on the movie industry. I'm building my own movie industry!"

Opposite: *Karen Brece (Natalie Wood), Lillian Reynolds (Louise Fletcher) and Michael Brace (Christopher Walken) argue about the practical applications of the "emotion recorder" device.* Top: *Karen, aided by Hal and Wendy Abramson (Joe Dorsey and Georgianne Walken) patches into the Company's computer.* Left and above: *Douglas Trumbull directs Natalie Wood during the filming of* Brainstorm.

STEVEN SPIELBERG, THE MAN WHO BROUGHT YOU

YOU'VE SEEN THE FILMS NOW READ THE BOOK

THE STEVEN SPIELBERG STORY

Fascinating, anecdotal and informative, Tony Crawley has written the biography of the world's most successful film director.

Lavishly illustrated, this lively portrait of the legendary creator of movie myths will delight the millions who have already been enthralled by Spielberg's spectacular films.

PRICE: £5.00 (pp)

Send a cheque/PO made payable to ZOMBA BOOKS to:
Zomba Books, c/o Marvel Comics, 23-24 Redan Place,
Queensway, London W2 4SA

To: Zomba Books, c/o Marvel Comics, 23-24 Redan Place, Queensway, London W2 4SA

Name . . . . . .

Address. . . . . .

. . . . . .

Please send me a copy of The Steven Spielberg Story
I enclose a cheque/PO for £5.00

Name . . . . . BLOCK

Address. . . . . CAPITALS

. . . . . PLEASE

Please fill out both coupons — Please allow 28 days for delivery.

UNA O'CONNOR – scream queen

Una O'Connor was, without a doubt, one of the most accomplished silver screen "scream queens" of the Golden Age of Hollywood. Appearing in such recognised fantasy classics as *The Invisible Man* (1933) and *The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935) she was as much a Universal starlet as fellow 'screamer' Fay Wray was for RKO after *King Kong*.

Born Agnes Teresa McGlade on 23th October, 1880, in Belfast, Ireland, she began her acting career at Dublin's Abbey Theatre and later went on to appear on the London and New York stage. She appeared in a diverse range of films, from *David Copperfield* (1935) and *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1936) to *The Return of the Frog* (1938). Her speciality performance was the part of a gossiping maid, which she perfected for her role in *The Bride of Frankenstein*, along with her famous ear-piercing shriek.

Outside the fantasy film field, one of Una O'Connor's most famous roles was that of a maid called Ellen in *Calvalcade* (1933), a part she reprised from the original C.B. Cochran Drury Lane production. In this memorable movie her husband, Alfred (played by Herbert Mundin), turns to drink and is eventually run over by a fire engine.

Her last appearance in a fantasy film was in 1944, with Charles Laughton, Margaret O'Brien and Robert Young, in *The Canterville Ghost*. Una O'Connor died on 4th February, 1959, in New York. ■

UNA O'CONNOR FILMOGRAPHY

1929 Dark Red Roses (film debut). 1930 Murder; To Oblige a Lady; Timbuctoo. 1933 Cavalcade; THE INVISIBLE MAN; Mary Stevens, M.D.; Pleasure Cruise. 1934 The Poor Rich; Horse Play; Orient Express; All Men Are Enemies; The Barretts of Wimpole Street; Stingaree; Chained. 1935 David Copperfield; The Informer; THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN; Thunder in the Night; The Perfect Gentleman; Father Brown, Detective. 1936 Rose Marie; The Plough and the Stars; Little Lord Fauntleroy; Lloyds of London; Suzy. 1937 Call It a Day; Personal Property. 1938 The Adventures of Robin Hood; The Return of the Frog. 1939 We Are Not Alone; All Women Have Secrets. 1940 It All Came True; Lillian Russell; The Sea Hawk; He Stayed for Breakfast. 1941 Kisses for Breakfast; Strawberry Blonde; Her First Beau; Three Girls about Town; How Green Was My Valley. 1942 Always in My Heart; My Favourite Spy; Random Harvest. 1943 This Land is Mine; Forever and a Day; Holy Matrimony; Government Girl. 1944 THE CANTERVILLE GHOST; My Pal Wolf. 1945 Christmas in Connecticut; The Bells of St Mary's; Whispering Walls. 1946 Cluny Brown; Of Human Bondage; Child of Divorce; Unexpected Guest; The Return of Monte Cristo; Banjo. 1947 Lost Honeymoon; Ivy; The Corpse Came C.O.D. 1948 Fighting Father Dunne; Adventures of Don Juan. 1957 Witness for the Prosecution. ■

SENSE AND CENSORSHIP

An Appeal for Common Sense by Barry Forshaw

It's easy to arrive at false conclusions – the British Establishment is arguably in the process of becoming one over the vexed question of "video nasties", the flames fanned principally by the headline-grabbing exploitation of popular newspapers, as well as the usual self-appointed guardians of morality, religion and public decency.

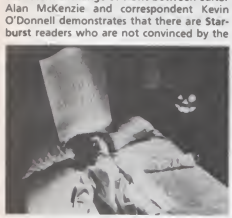
But we at **Starburst** might be guilty of little conclusion-jumping too. One would have thought that a readership which buys this magazine for its exhaustive coverage of not only inoffensive fantasies such as *Superman III* but such grisly concoctions as *Evil Dead* and *The Funhouse* would hardly be likely to advocate the censoring of the very material in which they're interested. After all a rock music (or, for that matter, Shostakovich) enthusiast is unlikely to complain that a particular concert was "too exciting", and advocate the removal of "offending passages" of music.

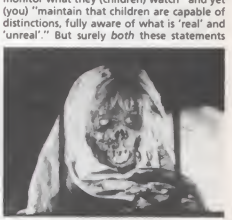
In the same way, anybody who wanted to watch, say, *Poltergeist* or *Halloween* is unlikely to lament that they found the experience frightening or disturbing – those are the very qualities genre enthusiasts are usually seeking. Most **Starburst** readers clearly enjoy the Aristotelian "Catharsis" experience of horror films, in which the darker impulses which we all possess are harmlessly slaked by a pantomime terror (while we sit safely in our armchair or cinema seat).

However, the avalanche of mail following the recent exchange of views between editor Alan McKenzie and correspondent Kevin O'Donnell demonstrates that there are **Starburst** readers who are not convinced by the position of virtually all the writers in this magazine – that *any* censorship is a dangerous precedent to establish, and particularly so in a genre which is unlikely to find "respectable" defenders (as E.M. Forster defended D.H. Lawrence's literary reputation against the would-be prosecutors of the '60s) It has to be said that at the outset even those correspondents who are worried about the effects on children of violent videos concur unanimously that censorship should be a matter of parental responsibility: that all adults should be obliged to watch video fare of a wholesome "family" nature because some parents take no account of what their children do clearly strikes most people as a ludicrous proposition. (Our most strident advocates of public decency maintain that *all* adult material on video should be banned outright, as certain parents will be insufficiently vigilant: whether this ban would reduce juvenile crime without any attention to the *real* roots of crime – urban deprivation, joblessness etc, is simply not mentioned.)

In fact, Kevin O'Donnell, more clearly defining his position in a recent letter, points out that the "Moral Majority" scares him as much as any defender of libertarianism, and that a system of certificates would be desirable to prevent minors hiring films from video stores (this, of course would require some reinforcement, as some video shop owners may be prepared to undercut such a sensible arrangement for the sake of a quick profit).

So – should you be allowed to watch an unlaundered, un-clipped print of *The Bogey Man*, *Death Trap* or *I Spit on Your Grave* in your own home? Of these banned videos, some kind of defense could be made out for the lively, comic-strip grand Guignol of the first two, while the incompetence of the third surely "defuses" its power to disturb – bad art is less subversive than more intelligent fare. Of course, *Macbeth* and the *Spanish Tragedy* have multiple bloody murders, but invoking the blood-soaked carnage of high art since the Greeks is inefficacious for followers of horror films. The fact that Shakespeare packed *Titus Andronicus* with tongue-severing, limb-lopping and enforced cannibalism, or that Euripides utilised bloody patricide, incest and blinding in *Oedipus Rex* doesn't cut any ice with the forces of repression, this, after all is art; censors have never liked freedom of expression in the fine arts – Richard Strauss' *Salome* had the scissors snapping in this country, but they know a strong case for the defense can be made out by high-powered literary or artistic figures. The much-maligned horror film however, has fewer articulate defenders – even though the appetite for artificial blood this medium caters to is *precisely* that exploited by Shakespeare, Dostoyevsky, Poe and Dickens – all of whom were fully aware of the delicious thrill of horror, and unequivocally used these elements to captivate their audiences. In a well-argued and persuasive letter, Peter Anghelides of Cheshire takes our editor to task over his "ambiguous attitude with regard to censorship" – claiming contradictions in the contentions that "it is a parental responsibility to monitor what they (children) watch" and yet (you) "maintain that children are capable of distinctions, fully aware of what is 'real' and 'unreal'." But surely *both* these statements





can be true without contradicting each other – it *still* remains a parental decision as to whether or not their child is sufficiently mature to watch adult material without adverse effects – once we put such power in the hands of the State, we are moving closer to an authoritarian regime. (Sir Hugh Greene pointed out that censorship is at its most fervent in fascist or totalitarian regimes such as those of Hitler and Stalin).

Peter Anghelides continues that it is "up to (us) to furnish evidence that there is no appreciable effect (from adult videos) before abandoning censorship." However, a far more august body than the **Starburst** staff, the members of the government-commissioned Williams committee, did just that. Their exhaustive survey, by far the most balanced and comprehensive ever conducted, came up with the unacceptable conclusion that the "deprave and corrupt" issue is simply unproven. And as canny juvenile delinquents realised that magistrates, the public and press pundits are all too ready to listen to cries of "I did it after watching video nasties", the Home Secretary quietly buried the findings of the report, its implications perhaps throwing too much emphasis on the necessity to deal with the social causes of juvenile crime.

Mr Angelides' final point, that the complete absence of censorship would "lead to an inability to distinguish between what is entertaining and what is truly horrible" prompts further references to our greatest writer – is the putting out of Gloucester's eyes on stage in *King Lear* more or less entertaining than the grisly rhetoric of *Last House on the Left* or *Psycho* or for that matter, less "truly horrible"? Shakespeare's extra moral dimension (not to deny Hitchcock's deeper concerns) surely makes for the more disturbing experience. Of course, one silent majority we hear little from are the younger video viewers supposedly at the mercy of celluloid excesses – at **Starburst** we probably receive more feedback from this are than just about any other magazine. Young readers Gary Bennett, Steven Penman and Daren Atkins have written articulate and encouragingly balanced letters on this subject – of course, it will be claimed that only brighter, more analytically minded children would write to a magazine like **Starburst**, that takes its films seriously.

Daren Atkins suggests that children should not be allowed to watch such as *Creepshow* (although he himself has seen it – without suffering any nightmares!), while Steven Penman proposes parental discretion as the final arbiter. As so often in the adult letters – the idea of cinema-style certificates is the practical solution favoured by Gary Bennett, who accepts his parents' judgements on films he may see (agreeing that *The Exorcist* be excluded).

Back with our adult readership, Ian Covell points out the inevitable de-sensitising process which a diet of celluloid mayhem may incur, and while there is unquestionably some persuasive argument to be made for this view, modern viewers of *Suspiria* and *Friday the 13th* would probably find their earlier pulse-raising at less visceral films quaint now) – a view shared by reader D.J. Radlett – there is surely a point at which de-sensitisation *stops* with most people, ie, the moment of switching off a TV or leaving a cinema and re-emerging into a world violent enough, but in which zombies, vampires, and even chainsaw maniacs are not the principal perpetrators of bloodshed. And as R.I. Barycz says, quoting Lawrence, that people need a sense of the "reality of pain" to keep a balance of concern, "the old convention whereby someone hit by a .45 at close range just went 'aahl' and fell forward with a clean shirt was much more censorable – it misled about reality". He continues with a perceptive variation on Parkinson's Law: "Having put censors into employment they take great care to remain in employment by finding lots of reasons to exercise their legal obligations, and in the habit of empire builders, expand themselves" – and it goes without saying that it wouldn't be just the dire Italian or Spanish rip-offs such as *Cannibal Man* that would be the only casualties – talented directors such as Argento (*Inferno*), De Palma (*Dressed to Kill*) and Carpenter (*The Thing*) would be similarly banned (as pending government legislation may disregard the Video Industry's attempts at classification).

William J. Haggan comments on the bizarre certificate decisions taken by the B.B.F.C. – a trend likely to continue when unreleased video films are submitted for review – but both G. Blakesly and Martyn Carre suggest that certificates may go some way to placating those who would ban *all* horror videos.

Peter Lynch makes the point (little observed elsewhere) that many video "nasties" are too incompetently made to "deprave" even the most impressionable ("*Driller Killer* was a thoroughly boring and banal exercise in tedium"), but Ian Covell is clearly thinking of more pesuasive movies when he remarks that "the basic fault with gore films is that you are invited to participate in the death; you are one with the killer" – but is this really true of successful "knife maniac" movies such as *Halloween* or *Psycho*? The extensive use of subjective camera P.O.V. in the former (and its legion of imitators) may go some way to shore up Mr Corell's point, but the ultimate logic of most such films is that the final survival of heroine (or hero) is the principal source of suspense generation (we may be exhilarated by the brilliantly edited depiction of Janet Leigh's murder, but we feel an acute sense of waste and loss, while audiences unquestionably want Jamie Lee Curtis to survive. And the new trend of heroines who "fight back" – from *Friday the 13th* on – has those same audiences cheering. At one with the killer?)

Andrew Gambrell opines that "our whole society is based upon freedom of speech and freedom of choice," but the new return to Victorian values of suppressions and restraint may well create a new underside of forbidden impulses as dark as that of the unhappy Victorian era.

Peter H. Robinson comments, "I get very annoyed at having to turn youngsters under 15 and 18 away from the box office when we screen certificate 15 and 18 films. Refusing admission in these days of declining audiences really does hurt – yet the local video dealers hire to these youngsters material I have refused them admission to," and clearly the enforcement of certificate selection by video dealers will be important in any industry bosses' scheme. After all, the many letters **Starburst** has received (and I regret that space prevents my mentioning all our correspondents) shows a clear-sighted ability to "deal with" the excitements of video experiences without becoming de-sensitised to violence in real-life situations – J.Y.T. Lau (like Martin Amis in a recent Observer article) mentions his enjoyment of filmic violence being balanced by an abhorrence of the genuine variety: one can only regret that the particular silent majority Starburst speaks for, being less stridently vocal than those who would decide what we should see or hear, are likely to be disregarded by both Press and Parliament. ■

STRANGE CREATOR

Alan Jones interviews the director and co-writer of genre favourites Strange Behaviour (aka, Dead Kids) and Strange Invaders, Michael Laughlin.

Strange Invaders was a virtually unknown quantity when I saw it for the first time. Its sudden appearance, with the minimal lack of the usual Hollywood hype, certainly didn't lead me to expect anything that would bowl me over so completely in quite the way it did. And I still can't remember having had so much fun with a movie for a long time prior to it – and certainly not since!

In retrospect of course, anybody who had seen Michael Laughlin's directorial debut with *Strange Behaviour/Dead Kids* shouldn't have been in the least bit surprised that *Strange Invaders* turned out as well as it did.

So I was anxious to meet the man who had given such a caring and constantly delightful cinematic valentine to all lovers of the Science Fiction/Horror genre. And as luck would have it, I found myself talking to him in his elegant town house located in Manhattan's fashionable Upper East Side the same week that *Strange Invaders* opened nationwide in America to reviews echoing my own sentiments exactly.

A few autobiographical details first. "I grew up in Illinois in towns very similar to those depicted in *Strange Behaviour* and *Strange Invaders*. I always wanted to be in the movie business so as soon as I could I went to California after I graduated from college under the guise of going to Law school and becoming a lawyer. In reality it was all a ruse in my fantasy plan of becoming a producer. No one was interested initially of course and it took me a couple of years to work out how I was going to achieve that end. Eventually, at 26 years old, I produced my first film – a small one shot in England called *The Whisperers* starring Dame Edith Evans and directed by Bryan Forbes. I stayed in England to produce Mike Sarne's *Joanna* which I really enjoyed doing as it was such a great period to be in London."

Back once again in Los Angeles, Laughlin produced Monte Hellman's *Two-Lane Blacktop* when in October 1978 he picked up a magazine called *Millimeter* and read an article in it titled "Summer Movies". "The article was by William Condon and I thought it was intelligent and very well-written. I decided I wanted to meet him and when we did our informal writing partnership began. We started to develop a few ideas with various studios, but one with Warner Brothers was so slow in getting off the ground that it prompted us to branch off on our own and write a script that I could direct. The result being *Strange Behaviour*."

Strange Behaviour was a striking debut from Laughlin and very well received critically. It concerned a series of bizarre murders in a small mid-western college town that are eventually traced back to a sinister government research centre which is carrying out weird experiments on unknowing volunteers amongst the teenage population. Using flair and imagination, Laughlin blended disparate genres and themes effortlessly with a style one can now see consolidated in *Strange Invaders*. "I began in the horror genre because I know all the films so well, especially the ones from the '50s. I believe in them. It isn't called a genre for nothing. I don't like contemporary, eccentric, modern – call them what you will – movies. I believe in the rules for a genre picture. I like to improvise and put my own personal touches and twists to them so I can play the melodies a little differently. But I always stick to the ground rules."

Strange Behaviour cost 3 million dollars to make and for a film set in the American mid-west, it was surprisingly filmed in New Zealand. "By the time we had raised the financing and were ready to go, it was winter in the mid-west. New Zealand was suggested and settled on because it was like going back to the '50s as they still have corner stores and picket fences. It was very easy to get to when you consider some locations. So we took a crew of 40 people over and we all enjoyed it. It was weird but it worked in the film to very good effect."

Strange Behaviour often sports the alternative title of *Dead Kids*, and although it is available on video, it has yet to be granted a theatrical release. When it does the chances are that the final moments of the film will be cut by the distributor. Not because of any censorship problems but due to the fact that it ends with a wedding ceremony. "The title *Dead Kids* came out of the punk sensibility that was very prevalent at the time we were making it. That idea became so swamped that consciously throughout production we were thinking of what to (eventually) call it. I ended the movie on a happy note because I was so sick of seeing ludicrous twist endings. Plotwise it was intentional too as I felt I had to resolve the melodramatic family aspects of the story."

For *Strange Behaviour*, William Condon began the story and wrote the first 15 pages fo the script before being joined by Laughlin. With *Strange Invaders* this process was in reverse. "We talked about it all the time, of course, and what we both wanted to achieve with *Strange Invaders* was a sense of fun and to capture an emotional response to period '50s movies. To recapture a sense of fun to cinema-going says it all really. I thought we had done a good job after I saw the movie a few times but when I saw it with a paying audience I realised we had succeeded even better than I had hoped."

Considering the special effects work, the budget for *Strange Invaders* was a pretty low 6 million dollars. "An average movie these days is about 10 million dollars but the low budget is partially the reason why I got the film off the ground in the first case. The fact that I had my knowledge as a producer behind me and I brought in Walter Coblenz, who had worked with me before as my producer, were salient points also. We had a lot of good people on the film who were able to work outside the accepted Hollywood mainstream."

Principal photography for *Strange Invaders* began on location in Ontario where Claremont, situated north of Toronto, became Laughlin's idealized version of small town America and then shifted to New Jersey, Ohio, Illinois and Pennsylvania. The province of Ontario supplied the production with a high-security hideaway for the special effects team consisting of an Alien Effects Unit, one for Mechanical Effects and another for Special Visuals, the latter being Private Stock Effects under the auspices of ex-New Worlder Chuck Comisky and the Skotak brothers, Denny and Bob. Together this nucleus of nine people have been responsible for such films as *The Thing, The Howling, Battle Beyond the Stars, Altered States, Cat People, An American Werewolf in London* and *Scanners* to name but a few. It was this area that Laughlin understandably had most problems with. "Making these films is difficult enough as it is. You really do feel like you are joining a special club any time you go through it. The special effects and the prosthetics were a nightmare to work

Above and below: *A series of scenes from Michael Laughlin's* Strange Behaviour *(aka,* Dead Kids*).*

Above: *A weird alien creature from Michael Laughlin's* Strange Invaders *models a smart pair of designer jeans.* Top right: *There is something decidedly spooky about the townsfolk of Canterville, Illinois.*

with as it's usually one shot a day. If it doesn't work then it's an 8 hour delay until they are built again and you are ready to go. The mask removal scene that occurs in Nancy Allen's bathroom was just so time consuming mainly because everything would only work at a certain temperature. Sometimes its a person in the frame, then a puppet controlled by 20 people lying on the floor with a mass of controls and sometimes it was just part of the alien's anatomy. You need enormous endurance – and that's putting it mildly! You know, I had a cast I was enormously fond of and I wanted to spend time with them, but I found that the aliens became almost like Greta Garbo and demanded my fullest attention."

On the subject of the cast, *Strange Invaders* managed to show a fine ensemble of actors all to good advantage, a definite coup in Laughlin's book. "I thought Nancy Allen was awfully good and captured exactly the personification of a spunky heroine. Michael Lerner too was extraordinary and I kept hoping a review would single him out and then the *L.A. Times* did which is nice because that is where he lives and works. A lot of the actors of course had been in *Strange Behaviour* and I did that partly because, working with other directors and producers, I hated this long involved process of meeting possible actors as it all seemed such a waste of time. So Bill, Susanna (Moore – Laughlin's wife and production designer on both films) and I hand-picked them without meeting or seeing them. We knew who we wanted and anyway interviewing actors is so embarrassing. In *Strange Behaviour* we liked a lot of the actors so we used them again. Kenneth Tobey was always in our mind even when we were writing the script but to this day he thinks he was hired because he and Walter Coblenz are old friends. June Lockhart we simply called up and sent her a script. The other member from *Lost in Space*, Mark Goddard, was an accident because his daughter was working on the film and he showed up one day to visit her. Naturally I asked him if he wanted a part. I like the casting process and with *Strange Invaders* I liked playing with the combinations so I could achieve a certain feel."

In fact the only afterthought Laughlin seemed to have concerned the joke about *E.T.* in the final script. "I don't know why I did it really. We had written the script long before *E.T.* had been released of course. In the back of my mind I was a bit worried about it, but then I figured it was better that I do it rather than somebody else."

One review of *Strange Invaders* said that it was everything *The Twilight Zone* should have been and this is something that pleases Laughlin enormously. "I loved that quote and I hoped that Orion would use it in the advertising as I feel it would have helped a great deal. But the ethics of the film business being what they are, means that you can't use a quote that puts down another movie. I really wanted *The Twilight Zone* to be great because at one stage Bill and I put the idea to Warner Brothers. We couldn't do a deal so we wrote *Strange Invaders* which I think we both saw as something in the vein of an episode from the series."

Another review (*Variety*) condemned Laughlin for trying to do too much. "To tell the truth I tried to be restrained as you do have to pull the audience along with you. To be honest I think I sat on it all the time and tried to avoid not going to far into cuteness or style. I wanted the film to work for a broad audience. I don't want it to be a cult film. I'm always being called quirky, which isn't my most favourite word in the world, but it keeps cropping up. I think critics

Above: *This creature from another world rips off its human disguise to reveal its true hideous self.* Above left: *Witnesses to the incredible landing of the alien mothership at the stunning climax of* Strange Invaders.

mean my films have an individual personal flavour. It annoys me, as just because my films aren't streamlined productions where you can't tell who made them, the word 'quirky' gets hauled out. I know the movies are strange as I wouldn't have used the titles otherwise. I wanted *Strange Invaders* to work for an audience who regularly go to the cinema on a Saturday night and the gratification is that those audiences are responding in exactly the way I hoped they would, even though they see it with different eyes to yours and mine."

According to Laughlin both Orion and E.M.I., who co-financed *Strange Invaders*, were very supportive of the project although he's a little disappointed with the way Orion released the picture in the States. "Both companies saw *Strange Behaviour* and on the strength of it read the script and finally backed the movie. I did have a lot of bureaucratic nonsense with people hired to look over my shoulder and report on the progress. I had my ideas and they had theirs and it was especially troublesome when some of the special effects weren't working. Generally though the principals behind both companies took these reports with a pinch of salt so we could make the movie the way we wanted to. Let's face it, I wasn't hiding anything from them or keeping any secrets. I just wish Orion had nurtured the film along and not given it such a blanket release. The first financial reports are that it is doing incredibly well in Manhattan but not so well everywhere else. I don't want any recriminations though as I hope other territories will see this as an example and not make the same mistake."

As a point of interest, E.M.I. in London have Laughlin's original cut of the movie but don't get too excited as there is a minimal difference between the two versions. "One of my favourite shots in the film is where the two kids are necking and unbeknownst to them the alien mothership creeps into frame. Orion asked me to trim that scene and intercut the spaceship with the action because they misinterpreted the laughter invoked as derisory at a preview. Telling them I was delighted with that response made no difference."

The idea of a *Strange* trilogy only came to Laughlin's mind after *Strange Behaviour* was in the can. "The third property is called *The Adventures of Philip Strange*. It's a spy thriller that takes place in New York in the '40s. Strange is a spy for the U.S. government who has a slightly aristocratic background. We have already written the script and it features a lot of Germans. One studio is presently interested but we haven't done a deal yet mainly as I'm not sure I want to do it as my next picture. I'm tempted but I don't want to overdo the idea. It's a much bigger project than anything I've done before."

For Michael Laughlin the reaction to *Strange Invaders*, if not in box-office terms then critically at least, has made the moments during production when people thought he was insane well worth it. "It turned out the way I wanted it to and the fact that others agree makes me feel great. As a director you have to learn not to care when you are working for hours on some detailed shot that seems totally ludicrous in context. Part of being a director means youn have to shut yourself off while everyone is telling you it isn't going to work when they see the rushes. But because I know what I'm doing, it isn't preposterous and now when my friends ring me to tell me of the amazing reactions the film is getting in the theatres – you can't imagine how delighted I feel."

NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN

"The action and the humour never let up."

by Richard Holliss

Sex! Violence! Action! In fact, everything the Bond fan could wish for! In Never Say Never Again.

If Albert Broccoli has been at all worried by the appearance of another James Bond, for which he is not responsible, then he has every right to be concerned. For the return of Sean Connery in the role of 007 is a most welcome one. For many people he was the only *true* Bond throughout the entire series. This is not to say that Roger Moore has suffered in comparison. The success of the last six Bond films has guaranteed him enormous financial security. They have also had a great deal of support from loyal 007 fans, and afficianados of tv's *The Saint* turned superhero. *Octopussy*, the latest offering, was a much better film than the tricksy movies that preceded it.

But *Never Say Never Again* is a definite hark back to the halcyon days of the Ian Fleming series, and not just because of its affiliation with *Thunderball*. It works well within its own framework, the only major criticism perhaps, being its length – over two hours. But the action and the humour never let up as 007 is coaxed out of retirement by M (Edward Fox) and armed for action by Q (Alec McCowan). Fair enough, it does take a few minutes to accept Pamela Salem as Miss Moneypenny. After all, who could forget Lois Maxwell in the part? But the addition of such characters as Rowan Atkinson, and the superb trio of villains, Klaus Maria Brandauer as Largo, Max Von Sydow as Blofeld and Barbara Carrera as Fatima, greatly make up for this.

The film has everything to offer the audience; beautiful women, hologram computer games, atom bombs, wonderful locations and *funny dialogue*. When Roger Moore was called upon to deliver a funny line, it came out almost as if he was sending up the character, but Connery's humour is more relaxed and the innuendos that spill out whenever an attractive woman thrusts herself at him seem perfectly natural.

The theme song is reminiscent of what we have come to expect from the earlier movies although the famous James Bond music is sadly missing. Irvin Kershner directs with a style that seems to befit the slightly overweight Agent and his battle with the dangerous SPECTRE Organisation, who have stolen two American cruise missiles. Adding together a marvellous array of sophistication, comedy and action, *Never Say Never Again* is superb entertainment. It deserves to do well and true to the film's title I hope Sean Connery agrees to do a sequel.

Starring Sean Connery, Klaus Maria Brandauer, Max Von Sydow, Barbara Carrera, Kim Basinger, Bernie Casey, Alec McCowan, Edward Fox, Pamela Salem, Rowan Atkinson.
Directed by **Irvin Kershner,** Screenplay **Lorenzo Semple Jnr,** Optical Effects by **Apogee Inc,** Director of photography **Douglas Slocombe** B.S.C. Produced by **Jack Schwartzman.**

BRAINSTORM

"Technique and visual artistry on show."

A Starburst Film Review by Alan Jones

Christopher Walken as Michael Grace in Douglas Trumbull's Brainstorm.

Brainstorm offers the first pseudo-religious cinematic experience since *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, safely wrapped up in a dazzling *tour de force* by ace special effects wizard Douglas Trumbull.
If his long-time-coming pet project suffers in any way whatsoever, it is in its naivety. But that is still a problem I see with his acclaimed debut as director, *Silent Running*. This observation aside, nothing can harm the major charge behind *Brainstorm*, as it is an absorbing and disturbing look into telepathic engineering with a spectacular pay-off that deeply touches us all, dealing as it does with the subject of life after death.

Imagine a special headset which subjects the wearer to experience perceptions and emotions involving every one of the five senses which have been pre-recorded on a special silver tape. After a decade of brainwave transference, this is precisely the breakthrough a team of scientists, led by Christopher Walken and Louise Fletcher, have come up with. The head of the company, Cliff Robertson, can't wait to mass market it as a recreational and learning device. Likewise the Government can't wait to adapt it themselves for the sake of the national security. In some very moving moments, Walken uses the invention to revitalise his broken marriage to Natalie Wood. Then Fletcher suffers a heart attack and before dying manages to record her last thoughts for a posterity than can now share them.

Walken just *has* to experience these moments, but when the military take control of the project for their own exclusive use, this all important tape is marked off-limits. How he cleverly gets the tape back, sabotages the military's prospective psychological warfare plans, and what exactly he sees comprises the climactic special effects laden personal odyssey.

Although *Brainstorm* starts off in confusion, it settles down plotwise to really be less than a sum of its parts. Nevertheless it packs a punch due mainly to Louise Fletcher's remarkable performance in the key heart attack scene. Otherwise this is a film where the performances don't really count for much – it is the technique and visual artistry on show.

Anyone expecting more in the same vein as *Blade Runner* are going to be disappointed because apart from an unusual sequence where Walken cycles to work past a row of futuristic buildings, the look is more *Tron*-like in execution. The major gimmick on show here is the shift from monophonic 35mm into Dolby enhanced 70mm for any scenes where the interior travelling apparatus is worn which projects the audience into fun places, the like of which haven't been seen since the heyday of Cinerama.

Above: *Dennis Quaid, Bess Armstrong, with Lisa Maurer and Lou Gossett Jr bringing up the rear, in a state of panic in* Jaws 3D, Below left: *Mike Brody (Dennis Quaid) and Kathryn Morgan (Bess Armstrong) pass the time with a toothy friend.* Below right: *Quaid and Armstrong, gasping for breath after their search for a killer shark.*

JAWS 3D

"Intermittently enjoyable popcorn entertainment."

A Starburst Film Review by Alan Jones

While *Jaws 3D* isn't really a film you can satisfyingly get your teeth into, it isn't as bad as its bite.

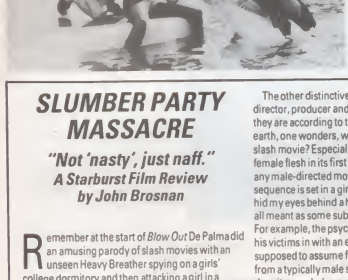
It certainly isn't the greatest film in the world – it's sloppy, full of holes and none too convincingly acted – but for all that, it is an intermittently enjoyable popcorn entertainment.

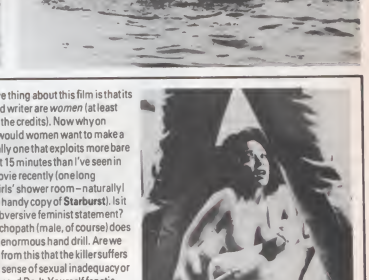
Miles better than *Jaws 2*, *Jaws 3D* replays all the old favourite Spielbergian shocks yet again in a shaggy fish story that owes more to *Gorgo* when stripped to the barest essentials. A marina theme park is about to be festively opened when a shark enters the sports activity lagoon and is captured for exhibition purposes. Unfortunately for all concerned its undetected mother goes on the rampage when it inadvertently dies in captivity.

Debut helmer Joe Alves exploits all the tensions and irrational fears of the water phobic by allowing severed limbs, terrified fish and crustaceous nasties to float within inches of our noses. The usual 3D trickery is at a low level here, although I was actually expecting a lot less after my conversation with him. I suspect the inclusion of the more obvious 3D footage was a decision taken by the producers in a panic, now the initial trend is on the wane. Still, the best usage of the medium is reserved for the finale when a hapless explorer, played by Simon Macorkindale, is ingested from inside the shark's mouth – a major coup occuring when the shark lunges in long shot towards un underwater control booth and breaks the protective glass.

Good optical and miniature work are a definite plus here – and so they should be considering this is the most expensive 3D film of all time!

Actually I saw *Jaws 3D* in an additional dimension. The air conditioning in the cinema was so strong, that during one of the major shark attacks, some of the plaster from the ceiling fell on top of me. It took quite a while for me to recover. So in many ways I may be overreacting to a film that some of my colleagues have thought less worthy of praise. But there again, I am more susceptible to this water-logged genre than most.





SLUMBER PARTY MASSACRE

"Not 'nasty', just naff."

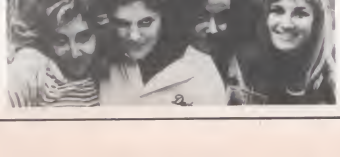
A Starburst Film Review by John Brosnan

Remember at the start of *Blow Out* De Palma did an amusing parody of slash movies with an unseen Heavy Breather spying on a girls' college dormitory and then attacking a girl in a shower? Remember how tacky it looked? How amateurish the camera work and the acting? Well, *Slumber Party Massacre* is like a *full-length* version of De Palma's short spoof. It is ghastly. It looks as if it was made by people who hadn't seen a movie camera until the day before the shooting started and the dialogue sounds like it came out of a packet. It is very sleazy, and in very bad taste. It is also rather amusing.

The question is: is it *meant* to be funny? Is it a genuine bad movie or a deliberately bad movie? I find it impossible to say for sure. I'd like to give the makers the benefit of the doubt and credit them with being so skilful they've created the illusion they're incompetent but incompetence of the level displayed in *Slumber Party Massacre* has a smell of authenticity. No one, I fear, can be *that* bad on purpose.

The other distinctive thing about this film is that its director, producer and writer are *women* (at least they are according to the credits). Now why on earth, one wonders, would women want to make a slash movie? Especially one that exploits more bare female flesh in its first 15 minutes than I've seen in any male-directed movie recently (one long sequence is set in a girls' shower room – naturally! hid my eyes behind a handy copy of **Starburst**). Is it all meant as some subversive feminist statement? For example, the psychopath (male, of course) does his victims in with an enormous hand drill. Are we supposed to assume from this that the killer suffers from a typically male sense of sexual inadequacy or does it mean he's a crazed Do-It-Yourself fanatic who's made one home improvement too many?

Don't bother wasting good money on this at a cinema but if it turns up on video it's worth seeing for a laugh. Though, of course, if it does turn up on video it will be labelled a "video nasty". Nonsense. It's not nasty, just naff. . .



Above: *Classic Stalk 'n' Slash imagery from* Slumber Party Massacre. Left: *The victims line up for the standard (and obligatory) antics of the Slumber Party blade runner.*

This month, Video File expands and changes format to cope with the ever-increasing number of new videos hitting your local video shop. As always, your views are welcome.

Video FILE

Tape Reviews by Barry Forshaw

The appearance on video of a late film by the doyenne of Italian horror stylists, Mario Bava, prompts on overdue retrospective – particularly in light of the fact that Dario Argento (favourite of **Starburst** readers and staff), owes his prowling, surrealistic visual eye very largely to his late mentor. But we'll leave *Bloodbath* (Hokushin) till last as any consideration of Bava's career has to begin with his debut as a director.

BLACK SUNDAY (1960)

This hypnotic black and white cult classic (from Vampix/Videomedia) easily transcends its indifferent acting and wretched dubbing to come across, even today, as one of the most poetic and lyrical of vampire movies. The performance of Barbara Steele as the vengeful witch who possesses the body of the young daughter of a nineteenth-century nobleman is a triumph of charisma and presence over really rather crude acting. (Her fainting spells are one of several elements in the film one has to bear with to appreciate the virtues abounding!)

Bava's fluid camera and brilliant use of atmospheric sets creates a haunting sense of unease in the viewer, and his years of experience as a lighting cameraman result in what has justly been called the finest monochrome photography in the horror genre.

Of course, Bava's film is equally famous for its censorship troubles – details such as the spiked demon-mask driven into Steele's face resulted in an outright ban by the British censor which lasted seven years. The heavily cut version ultimately given a sporadic release is, regrettably, the one issued by Videomedia now – but don't let this put you off the rich visual sensations with which Bava crams his film.

Certainly, the cuts reduce the film's visceral impact – already modified by what films have shown in the intervening years – to a level that would hardly disturb a *Friday The 13th* enthusiast. But provided you can make the requisite mental adjustments (there are other things one has to take a deep breath about – such as the fist fight that slows down an otherwise invincible henchman of the witch). *Black Sunday* will prove its reputation is justified.

MORE BAVA

House of Exorcism (VTC) and *Baron Blood (Guild)* re-surfacing simultaneously on video, forcibly remind one of two things: how Bava's surrealistic, garishly-lit and mist-shrouded visuals have greatly influenced the younger Argento and Fulci, and how often Bava came desperately unstuck with an inept script and miscast performers.

House of Exorcism (aka, *Lisa And The Devil*) is, quite frankly, a sorry mess – an incomprehensible conflation of *The Exorcist* and any *Psycho* rip-off you care to name; Britt Ekland's exorcism at the hands of an ageing Robert Alda (father of Alan) neither shocks nor disturbs, and the blatant borrowings from Friedkin (the priest's guilt over the death of a loved one, for instance) underline how much more effective Linda Blair's demon (and Dick Smith's make-up) were at totally unsettling an audience. The sequences with a lunatic butler (played, tongue firmly in cheek, by a lollipop-sucking Telly Savalas) are marginally more successful, with several effectively gruesome murders.

Baron Blood (which appears to have suffered some censorship excisions) has Ms Ekland being menaced again, this time by Joseph Cotten as a revived aristocratic corpse. The actor's appearance and performance can only be charitably described as appropriate to the part, and further charity must be extended to the director by reminding oneself that this was the man who directed *Black Sunday*.

Above: *Harrison Ford as Indiana Jones and Karen Allen as Marion Ravenswood in* Raiders of the Lost Ark.

BETTER BAVA

Of much more interest to the Bava admirer is *Shock* (Videoview) in which the director's acute sense of space is much in evidence, even if his eye-jolting colour schemes are more subdued than usual. Grisly *frissons* abound in this tale of a young woman pushed over the brink of sanity by a traumatic reconstruction of her past; a giant glass hand, for instance, adds to the edginess of the decor – particularly when it moves with no human agency. Dubbing is as grim as the plot developments, of course – and it has to be observed that much of the film was directed by Bava's son, Lamberto.

I remember seeing *Blood and Black Lace* (Iver Video) in a cinema in Wales (believe it or not!) and Bava's tale of a masked killer prowling a Fashion House was hooted off the screen for the achingly crass dubbing. But **Starburst** readers (being slightly more discerning) will be able to transcend this for the visual delights afforded by chiffon, marble and the director's cat-like camera. The crippling censorship cuts which truncate every murder are another matter, though, and it's a shame that *Blood Bath* (Hokushin) a much more mechanical piece in similar vein, is the one Bava film to escape damaging cuts – the video is more complete than the cinema version (my point being, of course that all Bava films, in an ideal world, would escape B.B.F.C. interference). However, *Blood Bath* (not to be confused with the abysmal Harve Presnell film of the same name) has its moments – the

TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT

all right, so we swiped this idea from another magazine, but we figured this is a pretty efficient way to keep you abreast of the best and the worst in the video market – isn't it?

HITS

1. ***Raiders of the Lost Ark*** (CIC)
2. ***Blade Runner*** (Warner Bros, R)
3. ***Onibaba*** (Palace)
4. ***The Thing*** (CIC)
5. ***Star Trek II*** (CIC)

R = Rental only

PITS

1. ***Warlock Moon*** (SVC)
2. ***Octaman*** (Iver)
3. ***Zombie Holocaust*** (VCL)
4. ***Werewolf's Shadow*** (Intervision)
5. ***Village of the Giants*** (Embassy)

opening shots of purple, sun-flecked water promise vintage Bava delights – but when the mechanics of the convoluted plot take over (in which characters are variously impaled, dismembered, etc.) one has time to regret the director's total lack of interest in motivating his characters beyond simple primaries (revenge, greed, lust). Still, the uncompromising onslaught on our sensibilities will divert (unless you're squeamish) and it's certainly more worth your while than *Baron Blood* or *House of Exorcism*. The film is also known as *Twitch of the Death Nerve* and *Ecology of Murder* (you can see why the last title had to go) and stars ex-Bond girl Claudine Auger.

"WHAT'S IN THE BASKET?"

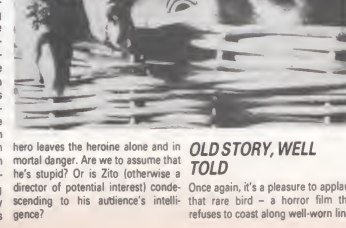
One can't really blame Palace Video for choosing the censored versions of tapes to issue in their horror choices in light of the current manufactured hysteria, but while *Evil Dead* still worked well in horror-comic terms despite excisions, the heavily laundered version of Frank Henenlotter's *Basket Case* that has appeared bears so many very obvious cuts (particularly in a brilliantly deceptive penultimate dream sequence) that an annoying sense of frustration finally sets in – invisible cuts (such as the shortened *Psycho* shower murder we had in Britain) are easier to live with.

Nevertheless, Henlotter's tongue-in-cheek monster romp still functions satisfyingly as a grisly E.C. style tale of brotherly love – with the hero's deformed sibling bloodily tidying up old scores from his wicker basket – and as a droll send-up of horror film excesses (the appalling chomping noises when brother is tossed a frankfurter or hamburger). The budget of around five dollars is marvellously transcended – as is the uncertain acting – by inventive special effects, including some deliciously crude stop-motion animation. Possibly a film to see with a good audience – or at least a couple of friends with a sense of humour!

MORE CUTS

Still with that unavoidable issue of censorship, it's curious watching Joseph Zito's *Rosemary's Killer* (E.V. Video) and experiencing what has now become a trend: watching Tom Savini's ingenious make-up effects being carefully set up, then vanishing, like the Cheshire Cat's smile, under the censor's scissors. Unlike *Maniac*, however, graphic dénouements are not the only item on offer, and Zito generates a fair measure of suspense as his heroine runs from the demented soldier who's decimating the cast. More than just about any film I've seen however, characters behave here with a totally idiotic disregard for their own safety – even the astonishing foolishness of the crew in *Alien*, concerning their pet cat, is made to seem positively cautious by the number of times Zito's

Above: *Daria Nicolodi in two horrific scenes from Mario Bava's* Shock. Below: *A scene from* The Wicker Man? *No, it's* Basket Case!



hero leaves the heroine alone and in mortal danger. Are we to assume that he's stupid? Or is Zito (otherwise a director of potential interest) condescending to his audience's intelligence?

OLD STORY, WELL TOLD

Once again, it's a pleasure to applaud that rare bird – a horror film that refuses to coast along well-worn lines of cliché, and sparkles with both imagination and humour. Jack Sholder's *Alone in The Dark* (Rank) won't have you reaching for every superlative you can find, but you will enjoy the underplayed irony in both screenplay (Donald Pleasence's trendy psychiatrist using phrases like "he's very heavily into his own space right now") and playing (Dwight Schulz's beautifully nervous hero, quite atypical of the genre.)

The plot is nothing new (escaped maniacs laying seige to the hero's house) but the solid cast (Pleasence, Jack Palance, Martin Landau) and director's eye for detail (the scenes of looting after the blackout that releases the killers, the nicely etched small parts of hero's daughter and a highly-strung black male nurse) keep one pleasurably occupied. There's an awkward shifting of gears when the film moves into its more threatening phase, and the individual madmen become just faceless menaces. But suspense and shocks are plentiful – particularly the throat-catching moment listed in the credits as "Toni's apparition created by Tom Savini"! ■

BRIEF NOTES

capsule comments by starburst video reviewer barry forshaw

Class of 1984 (Thorn/EMI): An updated remake of *The Blackboard Jungle* – but while *1984's* put-upon teacher can retaliate via immolation and death-by-circular-saw, it's Glenn Ford's battle that remains the more powerful. There, some moral argument was involved. Here, it's just thick-eared fun, diverting enough in its way.

The Spectre of Edgar Allan Poe (SVC): This farrago purports to describe the real-life Poe's travails with his insane love, Lenore. Robert Walker Jr struggles vainly as the gloomy poet. Censorship cuts mar the badly staged climaxes.

The Beastmaster (Thorn/EMI): Divertingly undemanding fare, not too badly crippled by a cliche-ridden script. Marc Singer and Tania Roberts both look good, which makes up for their rudimentary acting. Directed by Don *(Phantasm)* Coscarelli.

Ghidrah The Three-Headed Monster (Mountain Video): Packaged for the kiddie market, Inoshira Honda's indifferent monster slugfest hardly engages adult attention.

Flight to Mars (Videoform): Of historical interest only. A primitive example of early 50s sf, it looks particularly quaint in this post-*Star Wars* age.

It's Only A MOVIE

A Film Column by John Brosnan

Well, here it is at last – the movie I never thought we'd see, the rogue remake of *Thunderball*, originally known as *Warhead* but now called *Never Say Never Again*. It's an in-joke title and therefore appropriate for a film that is full of in-jokes. One of my main criticisms, and I have several (of course), is that the movie is too jokey in a self-conscious way for its own good. The nadir in this area is reached with Rowan Atkinson's appearances which are simply appalling. At times like these it seems the makers are trying to out-do Broccoli and friends in the bad joke department, and almost succeeding.

An overdose of camp humour was to be expected seeing that the screenplay was written by Lorenzo Semple Jr, the man who camped up Batman, King Kong and Flash Gordon. In fact it could have been a lot worse, and probably would have been if Semple alone had been responsible for the script but though he receives sole writing credit a number of other people had a hand in it, including Ian La Frenais and Dick Clement (who no doubt added a much-needed British touch amid the otherwise all-American production team).

It's a pity that the makers decided to go more in the direction of the current Broccoli Bonds then reverting back to a straighter style but I suppose they decided that audiences today expect a Bond movie to be as farout as possible so they played it safe. Thus we have scenes like the ones where Bond pops up on the end of a girl's fishing line (and says, "I told you you'd catch me later."), where the villainess Fatima Blush water-skis onto the patio of a bar and where Bond and Leiter are fired out of the submarine in missiles that convert into hovercraft. But with all its absurdities the film never, thankfully, gets as silly as *Moonraker* or *Octopussy*.

Then again it can't really match a Broccoli Bond in terms of sheer spectacle, presumably because the makers lacked the financial resources. Though it cost over 20,000,000 dollars *Never Say Never Again* doesn't have the visual grandeur of even the 1965 *Thunderball* which cost only 5 million dollars (apart from inflation to consider one must also remember that a *quarter* of *Never Say Never's* budget went straight into Connery's pocket!). But where this movie is far superior to Broccoli's productions is the performances themselves. Not only is there the pleasure of seeing Connery as Bond again – and despite looking older than Roger Moore is still infinitely more believable in the role – there's also Klaus Maria Brandauer and Barbara Carrera who are both excellent as the villains.

Brandauer, who was Connery's personal choice (he had casting control), plays Largo and is much better than the somewhat wooden Adolfo Celi who played the same part in *Thunderball*. Brandauer's Largo is a charming, vibrant, *alive* character – he hums with manic power and suppressed energies and radiates a genuine sense of danger (something which none of the Broccoli Bond villains have done recently). Brandauer has managed the difficult trick of making this stock megalomaniac character seem to be of real flesh and blood which provides the film with a much-needed dimension of reality. And Barbara Carrera manages a similarly impressive trick with her portrayal of the deadly Fatima Blush. She too brings to life an equally stock character, playing her with energy and enthusiasm and investing her with more than a touch of underlying madness. Fatima Blush is a villainess who obviously enjoys her work – she fairly bubbles with excitement prior to her assassination jobs – and so like Brandauer's Largo has a genuine air of menace (can you imagine what Maud Adams, star of *Octopussy*, would have been like in the role? It would have been Boredom City all the way).

But one acting disappointment was Max Von Sydow as Blofeld, head of SPECTRE. Apparently his role was drastically cut but even so his performances was distinctly *un*menacing which is a pity because I always thought he would make an ideal Bond villain (perhaps it was the bow tie he was wearing that spoiled the effect for me – Ernst Stavro Blofeld may be a monster but he does have *some* taste). Also SPECTRE was rather wasted in the film; as it's the one aspect of Bond that Broccoli can't use any more I expected the makers of *Never* to take full advantage of the fact and exploit the famous criminal organisation for all its worth (I also noticed that SPECTRE had undergone a name change: Blofeld referred to it as The Special Executive for Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion whereas originally it included Counter-Intelligence. Looks like the recession has caused cut-backs at SPECTRE too).

The main disappointment with the movie is the climax. It was a mistake to stage the final encounter between Bond and Largo underwater. The makers should have followed the example of *Thunderball* and taken the action out of the water at the end; instead they just wasted both Connery and Brandauer. It could have been anyone behind those face-masks, and probably was. It would have been much better to have had the climax on Largo's magnificent yacht (it was such a beautiful vessel I was looking forward to seeing it blown up) or on dry land.

No, as the climax of a Bond movie this one is definitely a wet squib. And even worse was the epilogue which played with the audience's expectancy of the usual Bondian sting-in-the-tail: instead of a SPECTRE assassin we got Rowan Atkinson again who, naturally, fell into the swimming pool.

I suspect the only person who found *that* funny was Albert R. Broccoli.

Overall I liked *Never Say Never Again* but it fell far short of the movie it could have been. The makers should have been more adventurous instead of simply trying to beat Broccoli at his own game. As it is they've missed too many opportunities and failed to produce a really original James Bond film.

Still, *anything* would have been an improvement on *Octopussy*. ■

TV ZONE

by Richard Holliss

With the addition of the fourth channel, it is perhaps interesting to take a look back at last year's fantasy film and television selections.

Certainly we all owe a great debt to Channel 4. Not only has it continued to screen episodes of *The Avengers*, but it has also shown *The Prisoner* and a series of B science fiction films, many of which are so atrocious they wouldn't even make it on to one of the cheaper video labels. But with these congratulations come disappointments. Only one word seemed to grace the vocabulary of the Channel 4 programme planners: "Cut!" *Every* single episode of *The Avengers* starring Diana Rigg was trimmed in some way or other. Usually the cuts meant the absence of the famous tag sequences that opened and closed each story. Sometimes the credits would be a fraction shorter than usual, with the scene of the champagne being poured out, prior to the words *The Avengers*, been omitted and occasionally whole sections were missing during the story.

In *Never, Never Say Die*, guest-starring Chris Lee, the very amusing sequence with the hitch hiker and the banana has altogether vanished. In *The Living Dead*, not only were the tags missing, but there were two major cuts in the story. One where Steed watches Alister Williamson making up his face in a clearing in the forest (it helps to make more sense of the gag later in the episode about the suntan lotion), and when Mandy Mckay (Pamela Ann Davy) from FOG, stutters between mouthfuls of drink on the hazards of meeting a ghost. One sure way of knowing if an episode has been cut was to check the running time (it should be 46 minutes).

The sad thing is that these repeat screenings are probably going to be the last airings of these shows on British television, and the likelihood that even if they are shown once more, that new prints will be struck from the negatives is even more unlikely. It should be pointed out however, that although the story behind the cuts is a controversial one, Channel 4 are not entirely to blame.

With *The Prisoner* it's a different complaint. What happened to the running order? Episode 7 instead of episode 2? I know the basic storyline is similar, but the dialogue in *Many Happy Returns* is far more relevant if the story appears in the series where it should have done and not a week after McGoohan arrives in the Village. But what was even worse was the cut in episode 3, *A, B and C*. Some may say that unless you already knew that the episodes were cut, then it didn't really notice. I disagree with that, particularly in the case of *A, B and C*. The break in continuity was disastrous and made a sow's ear of the storyline. Perhaps the programme controllers were so eager to call it *A, C and a bit of B*, that they forgot the importance of getting the alphabet in the right order.

Channel 4 are not alone in the cutting of films and tv shows. Leslie Halliwell's film department on ITV have successfully butchered many fantasy films in the past, including Ray Harryhausen's quartet of successes, *The Seventh Voyage of*

Sinbad, Mysterious Island, Jason and the Argonauts, and *First Men in the Moon.* Henry Levin's *Journey To the Centre of the Earth* was cut by 25 minutes because ITV chose instead to screen the appallingly edited American tv version rather than the original. Nobody, it seems, even noticed the director's name appearing twice on the credits. Irwin Allen's *The Lost World* was severely chopped up on ITV, and we all remember how a *single word* that was used twice in *Alien* was relegated to the cutting room floor. Ironic, when you consider that *they* can be heard on the Fox Video version and that language far stronger than that, can be detected emanating from the mouths of the gormless studio audience on channel 4's *Loose Talk* programme. An inane show that somehow is allowed to waste valuable screen time.

Another fantasy feast in 1983 was the BBC's season of science fiction films, including a great many Fifties classics. As a special bonus, the number of films shown far exceeded the original schedule, but even they didn't escape completely unscathed. The BBC chose to cut a scene out of *War of the Worlds.*

Television series have been few and far between. There were, of course, repeats of *Doctor Who* and *Blake's 7,* short-lived seasons of comedy classics such as *Bewitched* and *My World and Welcome To It,* and a selection of Rod Serling's *The Twilight Zone,* when the BBC finally sorted themselves out over when they were going to show it. Without warning it jumped to a double bill slot on Saturday nights and then, due to sports being interrupted, was occasionally cancelled altogether. I fail to understand why late night sports coverage is not scheduled as the last item for the evening. Then if they are cancelled, the tv company won't be inundated by calls from angry viewers, half of whom were annoyed at the cancellation anyway, and the other half who have waited up through the sports replacement, only to discover that their favourite programme had been cancelled.

Other shows in '83 included *Knightrider* from Glen Larson, producer of *Battlestar Galactica;* a puppet series called *Starfleet* from America and a puppet series called *Terrahawks* from Britain's own Gerry Anderson. The latter has now developed quite a cult following among Anderson fans.

What have we got to look forward to in 1984? More episodes of *The Twilight Zone,* the possible rescreening of some of Irwin Allen's shows, the black and white episodes of *The Avengers,* starring Diana Rigg, a new season of *Doctor Who,* and if they're ready in time, a new BBC series called *The Tripods.* And from America? Well, what about *Manimal,* starring Simon MacCorkindale as Professor Jonathan Chase, an animal behaviourist who fights crime through his ability to transform himself in to various animals? And for coverage of the forthcoming "V" mini-series, turn to page 10 this issue. Till next time . . .

Left: A scene from Psycho, *with Anthony Perkins as Norman Bates. Record reviewer Phil Edwards was reminded of Barnard Herrman's score for this classic Hitchcock film while listening to the same composer's music from an early* Twilight Zone *episode.*

Record WORLD

by Phil Edwards

There I was last time saying how the soundtrack for John Carpenter's cult favourite *Halloween* wasn't available, and within days of the column going to press it turns up, courtesy of those enterprising folks at Varese Sarabande. There *has* been a previous recording of *Halloween* and no doubt many of you out there shelled out about nine quid for a classy-looking Japanese import a couple of years ago. That version not only contained the music of John Carpenter but also much of the dialogue from the film. Reason was it was lifted directly from the movie soundtrack, not from the music master tapes. That version from the Land of the Rising Sun was not "authorised" and apparently Mr Carpenter knew nothing of it.

Halloween (STV 81176) has been worth the wait, and considering John Carpenter's lack of real musical training is something of an achievement. The use of synthesised music greatly added to the overall sense of menace which prevailed in the film and the cover notes of the album are interesting as Carpenter describes the change that came over *Halloween* once the music track was added. Apparently before the music, *Halloween* had little fright value, but once the music was on so were the shocks. Carpenter also mentions two of his favourite composers – Bernard Herrmann and Ennio Morricone – in the liner notes. It was, of course, the latter who provided the music for *The Thing* and music trivia fans might like to know that it was Morricone's music from *Once Upon a Time in the West* which Big John and Adrienne Barbeau had played at their wedding.

One suggestion before leaving the *Halloween* soundtrack – don't play it while you're alone in the house. I did, and convinced myself there was somebody pussyfooting around upstairs! Genuinely creepy but highly recommended.

The films of Peter Weir have never been less than interesting. *The Cars That Ate Paris,* while made on a meagre budget managed a crude air of menace and is a real oddity. *Picnic At Hanging Rock,* despised by many for its apparent "false mystery" still had much to recommend it. For my money it remains one of the best UFO movies ever made. *The Last Wave* used Australian Aboriginal folklore and mysticism to tell a tale of The Apocalypse. *Gallipoli* proved that Mel Gibson could do much more than *Mad Max* and was a genuine attempt to make an internationally geared feature.

Some of the music featured in *Gallipoli* came from the Jean-Michel Jarre LP, *Oxygene.* Not a million miles from Vangelis, Monsieur Jarre's electronic meanderings proved most effective in the running sequences of the film, even if it had some critics dubbing the movie *"Billabongs of Fire".* Now comes *The Year of Living Dangerously* which reunites Beautiful Mel, Serious Peter and another Jarre. This time it's Jean-Michel's father, whose been around for . . . simply ages. Born in 1924, Maurice Jarre worked on various French films before switching to the other side of the Channel where he made his debut with *The Longest Day.* Perhaps his best *and* best known score is that for *Lawrence of Arabia* for which he won an Oscar, a feat he repeated with another David Lean opus, *Dr Zhivago.* Interestingly, although it's Jean-Michel who's best known for his electronic compositions, Jarre Snr also uses the medium to great effect on *The Year of Living Dangerously.* In many ways the score of the film reminds me of the mood created by *Apocalypse Now,* although the compositions themselves are nothing alike. Perhaps it's that the stories are geographically similar. Whatever, Jarre's soundtrack certainly captures a feeling, which perfectly recalls the steamy images of Weir's romantic thriller. Great late-at-night-music. (Available on That's Entertainment Records TER 1065)

I hate to disparage a film without having seen it. But I'll eat my collection of Steve Reeves memor-

►

abilia if *Hercules* with the Incredible Lou Ferrigno is up to much. For a start, it's directed by Lewis Coates. "Who?" you might well ask. Coates is perhaps better known and reviled under his real name, Luigi Cozzi, perpetrator of *Starcrash* and *Contamination*, two of the worst movies one could possibly imagine. It's also got Sybil Danning who'll no doubt provide a couple of good points for going to see the film. On the music side Coates has managed to score good old reliable Pino Donaggio for *Hercules*. I've always been a big fan of Pino's work. Unlike so many film scores they make fine listening on their own, and that's pretty much the case with this release, although it must be said that the quieter and more lyrical passages do recall the composer's work for the Brian DePalma films *Dressed to Kill* and *Blow Out*. I'm not too sure about the "rousing action" cuts though. They may work in underscoring the on-screen antics of Incredible Lou Ferrigno (what do his friends call him. . . "edible" for short?) but on disc they sound thin and not a little forced and really can't compare with last month's *The Beastmaster*. Still if you're interested, and there are a lot of Donaggio fans out there, the vital statistics of the record are: Varese Sarabande STV 81187, and there's a free poster with the record.

For me, *The Hunger* was one of the major disappointments of this year as far as fantasy cinema goes. Despite the presence of two of the most charismatic stars one could imagine, David Bowie and Catherine Deneuve, the film, under Tony Scott's direction had about as much bite as a blunt fang. I'm afraid the soundtrack isn't that impressive either. Where the music of Schubert, Bach and Delibes worked passably well in the film, adding a great deal to the sombre mood, on disc it all just sounds scrappy, as well it might. Sandwiched in between the classical excerpts is the "original" musical contributions from Michel Rubini and Denny Jaeger and, boy, are they awful! For a while I thought the builders over the road had started working in the middle of the night! But no, it was merely Rubini and Jaeger fiddling around on their synths which was causing the unholy racket. But I suppose there's enough David Bowie collectors out there who'll cough up the required readies, just to have another LP with his *name and picture* on. File under "U" for undistinguished.

By the time you read this the BBC will be well into their series of *Twilight Zone*, the classic American show which Phil Edwards went into some depth back in issue 62 of **Starburst**. Now comes *Volume 2* in a six part collection of original music tracks from the series. I'm afraid that my critical stance hasn't changed since *Volume 1* of this seemingly commendable idea. This album features Bernard Herrmann's original Main and End title themes, the more famous Marius Constant's being on *Volume 1*. Four shows are covered on the record including the pilot, *Where is Everybody?* scored by Mr Herrmann. It's very much standard Herrmann fare and reminds me somewhat of his music for *Psycho*, although there are those who'd comment that all of his music sounds the same. That may be the case, or another complaint that the musician suffered from *Holstitus* is also probably true, but I must admit to being something of a fan of the man's music.

Other tracks include Fred Steiner's *100 Yards Over the Rim* which contains two distinct styles of music – firstly an harmonic-led Western theme followed by a more modern and discordant "melody". Interesting within the context of the show for which it was written, but not too impressive on record. For me, the highlight of the LP is Jerry Goldsmith's score for the episode, *The Big Tall Wish*. This twelve minute cut, coincidentally is also introduced by harmonica, although the effect this time is much more haunting and the suite works on its own, developing a jazz-like feel towards the middle section. Stands out like a gem in a cluster of paste jewellery. The record is rounded out with Nathan Scott's *A Stop at Willoughby*. This is the least satisfying of the pieces, as the nature of the story (a man on a train journey wishes himself back to the past) dictates abrupt changes in mood and style on the part of the composer. Great in the show, where an aural jolt helps the visuals along, but on record it is disconcerting, particularly when the *Camptown Races* roars out of the speakers! (Varese-Sarabande STV 81178)

See you all next time.

Film Book WORLD

by Phil Edwards

Top of the bill this month is a novel by a new writer which is sure to attract a great deal of interest. *Golden Witchbreed* by Mary Gentle (Gollancz, £8.95) comes with the publisher's star treatment of a full-colour dustjacket in the SF epic tradition. It's a big book with a large cast of characters, a novel set on another planet which involves the exploration of an alien society through the experiences of a young woman who is sent in to investigate it.

The planet is called Orthe, and Lynne de Lisle Christie is dispatched there as an envoy. A team of humans are already in residence on Orthe, but the humanoid natives have not allowed them to leave the city in which they are quartered. But Christie is soon granted privileges to travel further afield. Orthe is a land of many clans, most of whom are involved in obscure rivalries, and Christie becomes embroiled in these conflicts to the point where she is forced to flee into the less populous interior of the continent. All the while she is trying to comprehend Orthean society, but great surprises lie in store regarding the natives' history and sexuality.

The author wrote a fantasy for young adults several years ago at the tender age of 18, but this is her first full-scale novel. And a very impressive performance it is, too – far better than what most sf writers produce at their tenth attempt. *Golden Witchbreed* is a "world-building" novel of the most ambitious and interesting kind, the author managing to convey some of the richness and complexity of her world through its sights, smells and colours and the minutiae of everyday life. She also has a genuine narrative ability, and I admired the confidence with which she handled the convoluted turns of her plot and the complex raw materials of the story.

Large books such as this which create whole worlds are currently very popular, and *Golden Witchbreed* is a better example than most because it's written with genuine feeling and has no air of being contrived to reach a mass audience. However, despite its overall assurance, it is worth remarking that it suffers from some of the flaws of first novels. The most obvious of these is the influence of other writers – in this case Ursula Le Guin. Le Guin's shadow looms large over these pages, and the first half of the story is basically a reprise of *The Left Hand of Darkness*. And the writing does occasionally plod a little when the author is too studious in trying to evoke atmosphere or character; in these latter cases, to have written *less* would have been better. But all this is to carp, for here we clearly have a serious and able writer who has produced an enviable first novel. It will be very interesting to see what she does next.

Flamingo is the name of Fontana Paperbacks' new B-format line (everyone's getting in on the act), and from them comes *New Worlds: An Anthology*, edited by Michael Moorcock (£3.50). This is a bumper collection of reprints from the long-lived *New Worlds* magazine comprising fiction, criticism and articles, plus a useful index giving a contents list of all the issues from the first (published in 1946) to the most recent (issue 216, dated September 1979). There have been a number of *Best of New Worlds* anthologies in the past, but this is clearly the most comprehensive so far – not merely a raggle-bag collection but a retrospective of the publication with a long introduction by Michael Moorcock.

New Worlds was always a stimulating magazine under Moorcock's editorship, and this latest book contains some of the best short material which it published. There are stories by J.G. Ballard, Brian Aldiss, Thomas M. Disch, John Sladek and many others, plus non-fiction pieces from writers such as M. John Harrison and John Clute. *New Worlds* was greatly influential during the latter half of the sixties, and this is a useful introduction to the magazine for anyone unfamiliar with it. Someone boobed at the copy-editing stage, though, the Contents Page having the wrong page numbers for all but the first few entries. Not a very good advertisement for the launch of a new paperback imprint.

In his foreword to the anthology, Moorcock remarks that "graphics, editorials, letters and display type [are] the things which help give any magazine its special character." It's precisely the lack of these which made *Interzone*, the nearest thing we've now got to *New Worlds*, a magazine somewhat devoid of personality in its first few issues. The editorial collective who produce *Interzone* have lately realized this, and more recent issues have introduced such things as illustrations, editorials and reviews. The magazine is gradually developing more confidence in itself, and issue 5 contains short stories from Scott Bradfield, Richard Cowper, John Crowley, John Shirley and M. John Harrison. *Interzone* is now shrugging off the impression that it's a pale imitation of *New Worlds*, though Colin Greenland's editorial in the current issue reads like a blast from the hippie Sixties. As the only regular outlet for short SF in this country, *Interzone* is well worth supporting. It's published quarterly at £1.25 an issue or £5 for one year (4 issues).

Science Fiction Puzzle Tales by Martin Gardner (Penguin, £2.95) is, as its title suggests, a collection of brain-teasers on science fictional themes, all of which were originally published in *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*. I can't tell you much more than that because my mind tends to boggle when confronted with intricate mathematical enigmas; I have enough problems trying to work out how much I owe the milkman each week. Out of a sense of duty I did persuade myself to glance at a few, and they seemed pretty clever to me if you can ignore an annoying cuteness of presentation which includes lots of references to Isaac Asimov.

CLASSIFIED ADS.

MAIL ORDER

Dr Who Fans

Send a First Class Stamp for my latest list of Dr Who: Books, Annuals, Comics, and Merchandise. Also subscription available for latest Paperbacks and Hardbacks. (I will buy Dr Who items as well) Blakes 7 and 2000AD list also available.

JOHN FITTON, 1, Orchard Way, Hensall, Nr. Goole, North Humberside

COMICS COMPANY

Cheap New American Imports. Marvel, D.C. and Independents. Non-distributed issues, limited series and special editions. Marvels 35p, DCs 40p, Elektra Saga £1.35, Frank Miller's Ronin £1.75. Send a s.a.e. for free list to:

Steven Mumford,
11 West Lea Drive, West Ardsley, Nr. Wakefield.

FILM MAGIC

offers you

Fabulous Black & White and Colour photographs of your favourite film and TV stars. Thousands to choose from. PLUS Sci-Fi, Horror and TV Fantasy stills. Just send £1 for lists: **FILM MAGIC (a)**
18 Garsmouth, Watford, Herts.

SHOPS

NOSTALGIA & COMICS

14-16 Smallbrook Queensway, BIRMINGHAM B5 4EN.
Tel: (021) 643 0143.

American and British comics, Rock, SF, Horror and General Film magazines. Current and back issues. Comicstrip, SF, Horror and Television orientated toys, figures, kits, games, videos, masks etc. Mail order list is available for a s a e. Our large comic shop is open for you to call in:- Mon-Fri 10·00-5·45 Saturday 9.30-5·00. We can accept your ACCESS whether you call, write or phone

"A comic treasure trove" — Birmingham Post

Comix & Books Unlimited

(formerly the Comic Bookshop)
Comics (from 1939-Feb '84) SF, film & TV Fantasy. Monthly Sales & Advance Lists: Please send large SAE to:

2058 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3FS.
Tel: (0602) 411946.

Wholesale enquiries welcomed!

ODYSSEY 7

Main Shopping Level, Manchester University Precinct Centre, Oxford Rd, Manchester. Mon-Sat 9·30-5·30. Tel. 061-273 6666. Our sales area of over 1,000 sq. ft. is stocked with S F paperbacks, American comics, 2,000 A. D. Film T V magazines, soundtracks, books, stills, posters and role playing games. Send s. a. e. for catalogue. Personal callers. The Precinct is located at the junction of Booth St West and is above street level

Fantasy World

For unusual fantasy items & comic book stuff

10 Market Square Arcade, Hanley, (opp. Lewis's) Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs. Tel: 0782-279294.

2 Floors of comics, science fiction, film fantasy, rock books, Bruce Lee magazines and role playing games!

Open Mon-Sat 10·00-5·30 (closed Thursday)
MAIL ORDER SERVICE Please send large s a e for current list

Not sure of how to get to the shop? Send a s a e and we will send map.

COMIC SHOWCASE

17 Monmouth Street, London WC2
01-240 3664

Open six days a week 10am to 6pm. We are THE SPECIALISTS in old American comics and our vast stock ranges from Golden Age through to the '70s; including Marvels, D.C.s, E.C.s, Tunelvs and many more. Regular shipments from the USA enable us to offer a wide selection of the non-distributed Marvels. We now offer a full range of advance IMPORT comics from all the major companies. We are always interested in buying collections of old or rare comics in nice condition.

RODNEYS BOOKS

Comics & Fantasy
33 Longbridge Rd.
Barking, Essex.

Sheffield Space Centre

485 London Road, Heeley, Sheffield S2 4HL
Telephone: Sheffield 581040

We stock a large selection of S/F, Fantasy paperbacks, American comics, Portfolios, Magazines etc.

Open – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 10 am – 5 pm, Saturday - 9 am. Closed Wednesdas SAE for list

OGRE BOOKS

129 Picton Road, Wavertree, Liverpool 15
Open Monday - Saturday 10-5.15

Specialists in American comics, SF books and fantasy film mags.

Only 15 minutes from the city centre by buses 4, 60, 76, 78, 79, H6, H7, H9, H12, H13 and H28-24.
Sorry, no mail order.

FORBIDDEN PLANET BOOKSHOP

Comics, S F Film and T V Fantasy

SHOP: Mon-Sat 10-6 except Thurs. 10-7
MAIL ORDER SERVICE
Please send S A E for current lists to 23 Denmark Street, LONDON WC2H 8NN
01-836 4179

COMIC MART

Film material and thousands of comics for sale every 2 months at the Central Hall Westminster, LONDON
Starts: 12·00 Admission free.
Dates: February 4, April 7, June 2 1984

We have enlarged our Comic & Fantasy range to 100,000 in stock!! COMICS OF HORROR FANTASY TV ADVANCE IMPORTED Comics & Mags. DC & Marvel Comic collections and LP's wanted. Contact IAN BROOM on 01-594 2858.
(Look forward to seeing you)

● Readers are advised that only cheques or postal orders should be sent in response to advertisements in the Classified Ads section. *Please do not send cash* as neither Marvel Comics Ltd nor the advertisers can be held responsible for it.

POSTERS

POSTERS & PRINTS

Sci-fi rock pop humorous pin-ups scenes etc Choose from our vast range available by mail order. Send just 60p for our full catalogue listing HUNDREDS of posters and prints (many illustrated in full colour)

Cauldron Promotions (Dept. MV)
47 Landseer Rd London N19 4JG

EVENTS

LEEDS COMIC MART

Saturday, January 28th, Midday Griffin Hotel, Boar Lane, Leeds. Top dealers selling thousands of comics – Marvel, DC etc – film magazines, posters, art portfolios & all kinds of sf/fantasy material! Full details (sae): Golden Orbit, 34 Heworth Hall Drive, York YO3 0AD.
Future dates: March 31 & May 26.

Fantasy World Presents The Northwest Comic Marts

Britain's top comic dealers will be selling Marvel, D.C., Dr Who, 2000 A.D. Comics etc. Sci-Fic Fantasy film material, plus related memorabilia.

At These Venues

Liverpool Bluecoat Concert Hall, School Lane, Liverpool (city centre).
All 1984 dates: January 14th, May 5th, Sept 8th, Dec 1st.

Also At

Manchester Piccadilly Plaza, Exhibition Hall, York Street, Manchester (city centre).
All 1984 dates: January 21st, March 17th, May 12th, July 7th, Sept 22nd, November 17th. Doors open at 11am & admission is 25p. For further information & map send s.a.e. to **Fantasy World,** 10 Market Square Arcade, Hanley, S-O-T, Staffs. Tel: 0782 279294

NOTICES

ADVERTISING RATES

5cm (£65)	4cm (£55)	3cm (£40)

(4·4cm)

● To advertise in the Classified Ads section, ring *Sally Benson* or *Gilly Joseph* on (01) 485 4466.

Starburst DATA BANK

Information from the filing cabinet of Dr Sally Gary

This column, ye olde editor tells me, is intended for issue 66 of **Starburst**. Yet I am typing this around the time issue 63 is on sale. That means **Starburst** readers (that's you, pal!) have only seen one *Data Bank* column. Hokay, that's a good enough excuse for not burying me in questions. Now, I'm not accepting any excuses at all. Get out pens and paper and send me your queries *right now!* Every month, I'll be giving away a poster or some such film memento for the most interesting question. Can't say fairer than that, right?

FORGOTTEN FILM

Ron Sliffer of Kilmarnock, Scotland, sent me this lengthy poser: "I seem to remember a space movie I saw as a child (about twenty years ago!) in which a group of astronauts (including a Japanese girl) landed on an alien planet. The planet was pretty weird, with a lot of strange imagery – rocks which pulsed with light, crystalline trees and the remains of a long-dead, but advanced, civilisation beneath the surface. The rocket ship the heroes travelled in was similar to *Blake's 7*'s "Liberator". I can't remember much more than that. Can you tell me the title of the film?"

Yes, *First Spaceship on Venus* (1958, re: 1963). The movie was a Polish/American co-production, directed by Kurt Maetzig (whoever he is).

T – THE WINGED TURKEY?

"I recently saw Larry Cohen's *Q* on video. The idea reminded me of an old black and white film I saw some years ago on tv here. What was it, or did I just imagine the whole thing?" asks Rick Woods of San Bernardino, California.

Nice to know that **Starburst** makes it to the colonies . . . sometimes. There's an outside chance that you may be thinking of Sam Katzman's '57 clinker, *The Giant Claw*. But what's more likely reminder of *Q (– The Winged Serpent* in Britain) is the PRC 1946 production of the *The Flying Serpent*, which also featured Quetxocoatl the ancient Aztec god. Good old George ("Dignity") Zucco was top-lined in this grade-Z, and now hardly ever seen, programmer, *Q*, on the other hand, was pretty good.

WHITHER ALIEN 2?

Wendy Hynde, and several others just like her, writes from Croydon to inquire, "What ever happened to the planned sequel to *Alien*?"

Ah yes, *Alien 2*. A film of that title was released – but after the producers of Ridley Scott's classic, 20th Century-Fox, got wind of it there was a title change and the (terrible) movie finally saw release (on video only, I think) as *Contamination*, directed by Luigi Cozzi, who is also known as Lewis Coates. Some of these Italian schlock directors have got more aliases than Al Capone!

The problem with making a sequel to *Alien* is that the original film is still the subject of several legal disputes, with various folk who worked on the production involved in battles in the American courts. Until these problems are sorted out, it's unlikely that there can ever be a sequel. I've heard a rumour that at least one sequel (in this case a prequel) exists in script form and explores the possibility that the "Corporation" mentioned in the first film was responsible for breeding the Alien in the first place. Then there's the idea that the Alien managed to impregnate Jones, the ship's cat which Ripley takes back to Earth with her. Or how about returning to scripter Dan O'Bannon's original idea, illustrated very early on by Ron Cobb, that the Alien came from its own culture. All speculation, of course , but if *Alien 2* ever becomes reality (preferably directed by Scott and designed by Cobb and H.R. Giger) it's sure to make beeg bucks.

. . . ALIAS LUCKI LUIGI

Ron Williams of Cleethorpes (oh c'mon, Ron. Nobody lives in Cleethorpes!) writes: "I find all those Italian directors' English pseudonyms very confusing, particularly with so many Italian movies coming out on video. Is there a book which lists all their names and pseudonyms. And is there a listing of alternative Italian/British/American titles for their movies?"

Never fear, Alan Jones is here! Well, not quite, but Mr Jones has compiled just such a dictionary which will appearing in **Starburst**, over a couple of issues, in the near future.

MYSTERY MOVIE

"Help me, Sally Gary," writes Dee Crosby of Camden Town, London, "you're my only hope! In the George Lucas biography, 'Skywalking' by Dale Pollack, it's mentioned that Gloria Katz and Willard Hyuck were unable to work on *American Graffiti* at first because they were going to England to direct their own horror movie. I've tried every reference book from Halliwell to Walt Lee without success. So tell me, what was the film?"

Tough one, Dee! You wouldn't believe the trouble I had on this. Eventually, I ran across a clipping in my filing cabinet from a British Video Trade paper about the film. The title was *Messiah of Evil*, although it was also released as *Second Coming* (oh, yeah?). To further complicate the story, the shooting title was *Revenge of the Screaming Dead* (hoo boy!). For anyone not yet confused, I found two other re-release titles: *Return of the Living Dead* (watch out for George Romero's lawyers on that one) and *Dead People*. I've not seen the film, but it's a sure bet that any movie with that many alternative titles can't be much good! The facts are as follows: The movie was first released in 1972 in colour and scope, and ran to 90 minutes. It was produced, written and directed by Gloria Katz and Willard Hyuck, photographed by Stephen Katz, scored by Phillan Bishop and starred Michael Greer, Marianna Hill, Joy Bang, Anitra Ford, Royal Dano and Elisha Cook Jr. The movie is available on video in this country through an outfit called VDP Ltd, who can be found at The GEC Estate, East Lane, Wembley, Middlesex, phone 01-904 0921. How's that?

FANTASY FILM LIBRARY

Raymond Waters of West London dropped me a line to ask: "What books on science fiction and horror movies would you recommend, as I've only recently become interested in the subject and there seem to be so many available?"

Oddly enough, ten or twelve years ago there was very little available on the subject. There was Carlos Claren's *Horror Movies* and John Baxter's *Science Fiction in the Cinema* (Tantivy, 1968), both of which are still quite valid works – worth having. If it's good, solid reference you're after, you can't beat *Horror and Science Fiction Films: A Checklist* by Don Willis, Volumes 1 & 2 (Scarecrow Press, 1972 and 1982, respectively). There's also Walt Lee's *Reference guide to Fantastic Films* (Chelsea-Lee Books, 3 volumes, 1972) but its early publication date means that it's now far from complete. Bill Warren's *Keep Watching the Skies*, Volume 1 (McFarlane, 1982) also contains a lot of information on the early 1950s sf flicks and is an entertaining read. There are numerous books on special effects – so far as that area is concerned it's all down to what you're interested in. If you're technically inclined then get a hold of *The Technique of Film Special Effects* by Raymond Field (Focal Press). It's been around for several years but an updated and revised edition appeared a year or two ago. There's a wealth of picture-orientated volumes available, most of which are so-so. Hope this has been of some help. Maybe we can convince one of our writers to compile a critical bibliography.

HAMMERING THE POINT

Lorraine Pasco of Poole, Dorset, has written to ask: "Can you tell what ever happened to the planned Hammer Vampire movie *To Love a Vampire*. I assume it was part of Hammer's sexy Vampire series based on the Carmilla books. Also, who the Dickens played Dracula in *The Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*?"

I'll answer the easy part first, Lorraine. *Legend*'s Dracula was played by John Forbes-Robertson. Now the hard part. After exhaustive research, I managed to discover that *To Love a Vampire* was actually the working title for that 1971 camp classic *Lust for a Vampire*, which was the sequel to 1970's *The Vampire Lovers*. Obviously the hierarchy at Hammer felt that they would be better off calling a spade a spade. I mean, "To Love a Vampire" sounds like a gothic romance story. *Lust for a Vampire* is probably more descriptive of the finished movie. Either way *Lust*'s Yutte Stensgaard was a poor substitute for *Lovers*' Ingrid Pitt. That's only my opinion, of course. So that the Hammer fans and the male chauvinists among you can make up your own minds we've printed some neat-o colour pictures here. And because I liked this question best, a poster for *Lust for a Vampire* is on its way to you right now, Lorraine!

And finally, on the subject of Hammer, several readers have pointed out that **Starburst** has never really covered the Hammer movies in any kind of

Top: *Hammer Scream Queen Ingrid Pitt as Carmilla, vampiress extra-ordinaire.* Above: *Yutte Stensgaard as Carmilla, vampiress ordinaire, in* Lust for a Vampire *(1971).* Right: *Carmilla (Ingrid Pitt) gives Kate O'Mara the bite business in* The Vampire Lovers *(1970).* Below: *In this scene from the third of the Hammer Carmilla movies,* Twins of Evil *(1971), Katy Weil (Kathleen Byron) is about to get the fang treatment from the evil twin and fledgling vampiress Frieda Gellhorn (Madeleine Collinson). And I think that's quite enough blood 'n' boobs for one issue!*

depth. Those readers will be pleased to know that we are planning a special Hammer issue later this year, covering the classic Hammer movies and the planned new series of *Hammer House of Horror* which should be appearing on our tv sets during the summer months. Little is known about the series at press time, but it is likely to be in a 90 minute per segment format. More on that as we get it.

Until next time, then ...

Send all your questions on Fantasy cinema and tv to: Starburst Data Bank, Starburst Magazine, Marvel Comics Ltd, 23 Redan Place, London W2 4SA United Kingdom.

Beastmaster £5.99
Grand, sweeping orchestral score for Don Coscarelli's low-budget sword and sorcery movie with liner notes by the director and the composer. Recommended.

Sword and the Sorcerer £5.49
The score from Albert Pyun's entertaining barbarian adventure film, composed by David Whitaker and performed by the Graunke Symphony Orchestra.

Mad Max 1 £5.99
The music from the first of George Miller's Mad Max movies, composed by Australia's top film composer, Brian May.

Mad Max 2 £5.49
The music and sound effects from the sequel to Mad Max, also composed and conducted by Brian May, Australia's best-known movie music composer.

Hercules £5.99
A rich, orchestral score by the composer of the Dressed to Kill and Howling soundtracks, the always-reliable Pino Donaggio.

Halloween £5.99
The famous score from John Carpenter's famous horror fable is finally available. No collection is complete without this one! Also ***Halloween 2 £5.99***.

The Hunger £5.99
A blend of original music by Michel Rubini and Denny Jaeger and excerpts from classical pieces, including works by Bach and Schubert.

Tenebrae £5.49
The excellent score for the latest film from Dario Argento. Not actually Goblin, but close, performed by three ex-members of the original group.

Swamp Thing £5.99
The Harry Manfredi soundtrack for the as-yet unseen Wes Craven movie. Manfredi's other credits include Friday the 13th parts 1 & 2.

First Blood £5.49
An outstanding score by Oscar-winning composer Jerry Goldsmith, who also wrote the music for The Omen and Poltergeist.

Escape from New York £5.49
Excellent music by John Carpenter from an excellent film (also by John Carpenter). Synthesised film music at its best.

Twilight Zone £5.99
The original music from the classic tv anthology show, featuring the work of Bernard Herrmann, Jerry Goldsmith, Franz Waxman and others. Also ***Twilight Zone 2 £5.99***.

HOW TO ORDER

Send all cheques and POs (made payable to "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTIONS LTD" – send no cash!) c/o ***Marvel Comics Records Offer, 205–211 Kentish Town Road, London NW5***. Postage: Please add 80p for the first record and 40p for each additional record (3 records – 80p + 40p + 40p) and allow at least 28 days for delivery. Offer applies in the United Kingdom only.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Signature .....

(If under 16 this space must be countersigned by parent or guardian)

Hercules	☐	*Xtro*	☐
Swamp Thing	☐	*Tenebrae*	☐
The Hunger	☐	*The Secret of Nimh*	☐
Halloween	☐	*First Blood*	☐
Twilight Zone 2	☐	*Escape from New York*	☐
The Beastmaster	☐	*Twilight Zone*	☐
Sword and The Sorcerer	☐		
Mad Max 1	☐		
Mad Max 2	☐		
Videodrome	☐		
Creepshow	☐		

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT RECORDS

VARESE SARABANDE